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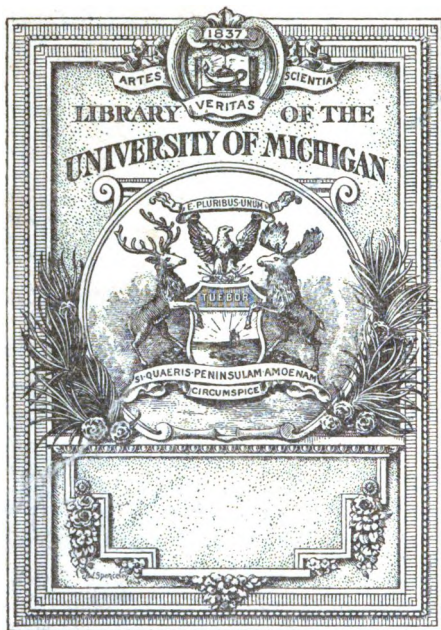
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1787

THE
HISTORY
OF
OPHELIA.

PUBLISHED BY
THE AUTHOR OF DAVID SIMPLE.

A NEW EDITION.

VOL. II.

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1787.

O P H E L I A.

C H A P. XXXI.

MRS. Herner and I set out at the very moment she had appointed; for I soon found, that she was as regular as a pendulum. I could have wished she had borne a more extensive resemblance to a clock; constant ticking, indeed, might have been too much; but had she struck, though it had been only once an hour, it would have been a great relief to me; for I felt an ardent longing to talk; convinced by her sex and age, that she

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B

was,

was, by inclination, loquacious, I hoped to vanquish her obstinate silence by the force of temptation; and accordingly asked her various questions, and such as I thought might be most interesting, but without the least effect; not a single word in answer could I obtain; and at last desisted in despair; keeping the rest of the day an inviolable silence.

As I had, for a considerable time, no employ but gazing at my fellow traveller's outward form, I will make your ladyship my companion in it, by describing her to you. Mrs. Her-ner was a little woman, near fifty years of age very thin and brown, with a very long nose and chin, hollow cheeks, wide mouth, scarcely any eyebrows, and light grey eyes, which, however, were not void of a sweetness, denoting some portion of good humour in the mind that animated them. Dejection and humiliation appeared in her whole aspect; her air, and every look, were prim and demure.

once

I once saw Mrs. Herner before I was taken prisoner by her cousin, and then learnt a little of her history, which I shall impart.

Mrs. Herner had originally a moderate fortune, and, on the death of the Marchioness's mother, who was her cousin-german, and intimate friend, she took the Marchioness to live with her, being moved to compassion by her being left intirely destitute of a provision. Mrs. Herner, from the time she first became possessed of her fortune, lived above her income; and though she perceived the principal was every year decreasng, she had not prudence to retrench. The rank in which she lived, gave fair opportunity to the Marchioness's charms to win her a more lasting provision than she could have received from Mrs. Herner; accordingly, before she was eighteen, the Matquis of Trente saw her, and becoming truly enamoured, married her: but lived a very short time after raising her to the rank and fortune which gave birth to her uncontroled insolence.

B 2

Mrs.

Mrs. Herner's fortune lasted a very few years beyond this marriage; and, by a strange fatality, she spent to the last shilling before she attempted to lessen her expences. When she had no longer means to support them, the Marchioness seemed to hold out the hand of consolation to her, inviting her home; but the poor woman soon found that pride, not generosity, offered her this necessary relief; for the Marchioness made her exchange poverty for wretchedness. She esteemed so highly an act she was bound in duty to perform, that lest Mrs. Herner should be less sensible of the weight of the obligation, she refreshed her remembrance continually, and expected, in return for her charity, that she should undertake the care of her family, and comply with every inclination her ladyship should condescend to signify. Her passions were extremely violent, and never appeared in such full lustre as when her unhappy cousin was the object; for as she had no other dependance, she knew she must endure all.

Thus

Thus the poor woman, for a subsistence, sold herself to the most abject slavery : but she was too proud to take any other means of gaining a support. "Pride that licks the dust," she had, but no true spirit ; for to pacify the Marchioness in her furies, she would descend to the meanest flattery, and was ruled by a frown or a nod. . From a continual servile compliance with the will of another, she lost all liberty of thought, of which only one's own meanness can deprive one. She entirely forgot the method of pronouncing the word no ; her language was composed of nothing but expressions of assent and affirmatives ; and she would contradict her own senses as often as her violent and capricious cousin happened to err. So accustomed to obey, she scarcely could find out terms that would express her refusal of the liberty she dared not grant me. I sometimes mistook her negatives for consent, and should not have discovered my error, had she not checked

B 3

me

me when I was going to act in consequence of it.

In this *lively* manner did we travel for three days, without accident or interruption. But, the night of the third, as I was beginning to undress myself, after having sat a little time meditating on my deplorable situation, I was alarmed with the cry of "fire, murder, rape, beast, brute, "savage!" The clamour I could distinguish to come from Mrs. Herner's room, and thinking myself bound in duty to assist even my enemy, I ran to try what I could do towards her relief. When I entered, I perceived her with a double towel round her head, by way of night-cap, in a short ragged bed-gown, standing by a bed, in which was a man who held fast by one corner of her little jerkin. I did not comprehend the motive for this detention, consequently knew not the cause of her fear; but sensible that I alone was not sufficient to rescue her from the arms of this giant, I attempted to open a door in the passage, in order to call in more useful

ful people, but found it locked, the consequence of my goaler's care of me. Had I not been of a most charitable disposition, resentment might have prompted me to let her suffer by the means she had taken to prolong my captivity; but I conquered the impulse, and taking the key out of her pocket, let in our hostess, and some of her servants, who, like myself, had been attracted by the noise.

Our landlady I found more equal to the task than I was; she soon rescued the timorous virgin, telling the gentleman, with a very sonorous voice, that "she wondered he, who was a
"Justice of the Peace and Quorum
"should so disturb a quiet family; for
"her part, she would not suffer such
"normous behaviour in her house, not
"even by his honour's worship."

He, with a voice that denoted much sleepiness, replied, "woman hold thy
"brawling; I have not disturbed thy
"curfed house; I was sleeping quietly when that wench waked me.
"She has a mind to coy it a little
"now, but the jade was willing enough

“ to come to bed to me before I asked
“ her. I did not want company;
“ but I scorn to disappoint a woman;
“ and I shall have her still for all
“ thy clamour; for I know she is
“ kind at bottom.”

At this declaration, Mrs. Herner screamed out, “ O save me! preserve
“ my honour! do not let the wicked
“ wretch come near me;” and caught up a candle to light her in her flight. Being obliged to pass by the side of the bed, in order to get to the door, the man had a much more perfect view of the affrighted fair than he had before, whose appearance, I must confess, was not very alluring; for her lips were greased with tallow, her eyes done thinly over with a dark coloured ointment, and the rest of her face covered with thick cream not quite dry; and through some “ chinks which
“ time had made” in her bed gown, her yellow skin shone resplendent; so like gold through a netted purse, that it could charm nothing but a miser. He beheld her with astonishment for near a minute, and then, with all the
appearance

appearance of scorn and distaste that his countenance could wear, which was better suited to such expressions than to any of a gentler kind, he cried out, "wicked wretch! not so wicked
"as to want thy company, thou
"witch, thou monster! full light would
"better have obtained thy release than
"all thy struggling. Have such a
"hag as thee by my side! I had
"rather have fowler or my crop horse
"for my bedfellow." This adventure shocked me strangely; there seemed an enormity of wickedness in this man that amazed me; but yet, when he had thus addressed a figure which had surprized me almost as much as it had done him, I could not restrain a smile. As I was near the candles, he perceived it, and looking at me (after the short preface of an oath)
"that's a pretty lass, faith," said he,
"and looks good-natured and merry. I love a 'hoddy girl hugely,
"that will make one laugh, and laugh
"with one, and share a pot of good
"Otober, when a man has no better
B 5 "company;

“ company ; such a wench is worth
“ fighting for ; and I will have her in-
“ stead of thee, thou Succubus, who art
“ nothing like a woman but in thy
“ brawling.” I was not more valiant
than Mrs. Herner, but being much more
nimble, I ran out of the room with the
utmost speed. Not unmindful of the
opportunity of the double escape I had
to effect ; and as desirous of getting free
from woman as from man, and I ran
through the door I had opened, and got
into the yard ; but was there overtaken
by Mrs. Herner, in fresco as before,
with the rest of the family at her heels.

As soon as I disappeared, she recol-
lected the desire I might have, and
not finding me in my room, was as
clamorous at my escape as she had
been about her own detention. With-
out staying for an increase of cloath-
ing, she ran after me ; and it is no
wonder that, unincumbered by the
weight of dress, she overtook me,
whose flight had been retarded by not
knowing where to go. I cannot pre-
tend to say what vengeance I might
have

have taken at being thus disappointed of my purpose, had not the servants of the inn revenged my cause with some success, by hooting at her figure, and bursting into such immoderate peals of laughter, that our hostess, at last, thought it incumbent on her to resent it; and with a shrill pipe, cried out, " what do the villains mean? Must " you affront a gentlewoman truly? " Did you never see a woman in her " smock before? If madam's lips are " chapped and her eyes sore, what's " the matter of that, it is no body's " business but her own, sure! such " fine tallow as we burn would not " disgrace the mouth of the first " Dutchess in the land; it is as sweet " as a nut, and much more *bealinger* " than all their *curous* salves. As for " her eyes, why eyes should be black, " should not they? and what signifies " whether outside or in, or inside or " out, its much the same thing."

This eloquent oration a little suspended the laugh; but they took in no more matter for mirth, that the
time

time might not be lost, staring without interruption at the object of it; for the good landlady, determined Mrs. Herner should hear how well she defended her cause, kept fast hold of her, till her flow of oratory ceased. When we were conducted up stairs, I was again locked up till morning, and then I attended Mrs. Herner, to whom another room had been given. At breakfast, our landlady came to pay her compliments of enquiry after the health of the poor affrighted lady, which was not a little impaired by the night's adventure, her fears lasting longer than her danger; for she told us it communicated itself even to her dreams.

As she condescended to talk with our hostess, though not to converse with me, I learnt the occasion of the disturbance, which was no other than a small error in the gentleman, whose intellects were a little troubled by too hard drinking in celebration of a fox chase, in which he had been engaged that day; for in going up stairs to bed, he had mistaken Mrs. Herner's

Herner's room for his own, and taken possession of it.

In the course of this conversation, I found nothing had so sensibly hurt Mrs. Herner, as the Squire's affronting her charms. When she had heard our hostess's account, she said, that, "indeed, by his strange boisterousness, she at first suspected he had drank a little too much, but did not find out till afterwards how totally he was deprived of his senses; of one sense, at least, for the man was certainly blind. The hurry and bustle that ensued, she supposed, had increased the effects of the liquor; for he seemed in full possession of his judgment, at first, only his passions were a little too much elevated to bear with proper composure the view of temptation." Thus attributing to the fumes of intoxication the honest impulse of nature, which made disgust the consequence of a full view of her person.

Mrs. Herner hinted, that it was incumbent on him as a gentleman to ask

ask pardon for the outrage he had committed. "So I told him, madam," replied the landlady, "and what think you he answered to this? Why, truly, taking me very short, and swearing like a trooper, he said, "not he, he should ask no pardon, nor make no defences; he had made the gentlewoman a very civil proffer, she might not receive the like of many a day; and, he thought, if she believed him in earnest, she had more reason to come and thank him than he to ask her any pardons." Oh! madam, he is a sad ribaldry gentleman, added the landlady.

I saw Mrs. Herner could have excused the warmth of the good woman's resentment, which led her to so faithful a repetition of the Squire's words, but, with some change of colour, she, at last, sagaciously observed, "that every one had a sense only of the charms of their own species. She never heard of a bat that preferred the elegant pheasant to its own leathery-winged race, nor of a hedgehog

“ hog that was not fonder of its own
“ shapeless kind than of the beautiful
“ peacock.”

Our conversation ended with breakfast, and we left the inn to proceed on our journey, that now drew to a conclusion; which, as I had received a strange notion of the confusion in inns, from what I had experienced, would not have been a disagreeable circumstance to me, had I not flattered myself that from it some opportunity of an escape might arise.

C H A P.

C H A P. XXXII.

OUR Landlady had entertained us with an invective against drunkenness, (though her complexion bore some tokens of less inveteracy against that vice) which employed my thoughts for part of the day. Nothing I had seen in this country more astonished me, than that, for so trifling a pleasure as liquor could afford, any one should relinquish reason, that best gift of the Great Creator. It is inconsistent with the pride of man, thus to destroy the source of all his insolence and presumption. But the terms in which this vice was reproached offended me. "The debasing themselves to the condition of brutes," was an expression I thought very unjust. Perhaps many, even when not intoxicated, have no right to be enrolled in so honourable a class; but when deprived of all sense and reason, surely they ought not to be compared to that generation, who act conformably to the will of their Creator, and to their rank amongst the animal tribes. Some, indeed,

deed, by living amongst mankind, lose a little of their native temperance, and acquire bad qualities; such is the force of example! void of knowledge of good and evil, they are qualified to walk in the way ordained for them, but not to resist the infection of the grand corrupter, man.

There is nothing so mean, as people who are artificially insensible; vegetation produces more useful materials; a tree, for instance, properly manufactured, supports a passenger; fills up a gap, or if worn out by long service it should be condemned, it blazes to warm us, fulfills its part, and is a useful member among created beings, in comparison of a man addicted to drunkenness. But, perhaps, your Ladyship will think I put an affront both on you and myself, by exclaiming at so undeserving a subject, unworthy of employing your thoughts, and my pen; therefore I will leave it for my journey, which ended the evening we left our turbulent inn.

We arrived at the Marchioness's castle a little before it was dark, which afforded me an opportunity of
seeing

seeing it, though the view did not greatly conduce to my satisfaction.

We first passed a moat, over which was a bridge, so impaired by time and damp, that it threatened us with no small chance of visiting the frogs, who inhabited underneath. I could not help thinking that they saw us approach, and taking us for the successor of their former king, the hoarse nation was once more ready to croak, "God save King Log;" but I afterwards found the noise was usual, and only the result of numbers, from which, among frogs as well as men, a general hum arises.

The castle was then tottering with age, and may now, perhaps, by the irresistible arm of old Time, be levelled to the ground; therefore I shall speak of the fabrick only in the past tense. The rooms were extremely large, wainscotted with oak, which was turned almost as black as ebony; and all the light that entered was from small casements, with a larger proportion of lead and iron than glass. The chimneys were as big as the

the arch of a large bridge. The beds were higher than some rooms, and all the furniture large and clumsy, except the chairs, whose seats were stuffed with admirable art, being harder than a tennis ball, and rising in the middle in imitation of a pyramid.

The hall was hung round with a most uncomely representation of the Marquis of Trente's ancestors, except in two slips, which were filled with rolls of parchment of a prodigious length, bearing, in the figure of a tree, the genealogy of the whole race. If a poor babe died in its birth, its memory was still preserved, under the dignifying representation of a little twig; but a miscarriage was honoured no farther than in being marked as a knot in the trunk. I could not but admire this care lest vanity should die for want of food, where few flatterers could come without feeling their consciences so affected by the solemnity of the place, as must have reduced them to speak truth. The garden was not, in extent, equal to the size of the house; but
what

what there was of it, was laid out in narrow gravel walks, then over-grown with weeds, bordered with box, and ornamented in quarters with yew swans, laurel bears, holly dogs, and box chickens; their colours happily variegated by the dead branches, which made up about three quarters of the animal, to the great ease of the gardener, who was, thereby, saved the care of watching over this his creation, lest their shapes should be destroyed by the irregular growth of some luxuriant branches. The wall of the garden was almost the extent of our prospect. We were not in the season for flowers; but had all the "perfumes of Arabia" been dispersed about the house, they could not have got the better of the stench arising from the moat.

You may imagine that our situation was better suited to the dark, than to the day; but in this you are mistaken; for the horrors of the night exceeded all the dismal prospects the sun could shew us. With the twilight our concert began. The first

first performance was a great house-dog, that would suffer no noise but his own, incessantly howling or barking. Every hearth was full of crickets, who chirped the live-long night, but had none of those lively notes which Milton celebrates as the sound of mirth. The old towers of the house were filled with owls of every sort, who, by their hoarse hooting, and their shrill shrieking, bore no inconsiderable part in the concert; of which the froggery made the base. These vocal performers were accompanied by all the modulations of a bleak winter's wind, which gathering in various passages of that rambling house, made a continual whistling, even in the mildest weather, roared in the chimneys, and blew in at a thousand crevices in the shattered wainscot.

Disfmal as this scene must appear, I found, that had I not retained very strong affections for absent objects, I could have been happy even there, if every face had not worn an air of wretchedness. Excluding the suffering
hours

hours of reflection, I was the only person in the place that did not appear in such a deep and settled despondency, as made me fear that I should, at some time, find all the family hanging in their garters; as I had learnt, that it was no uncommon thing in this kingdom for people to sign their own passports into the next world as soon as they are tired of this.

A general melancholy run thro' every species: there was a monkey who was so infected by his situation, that he might have walked chief mourner at a funeral; a parrot, who, ceasing to be articulate, uttered no sound but that of a piteous sigh. The servants had slit a magpy's tongue, in order to make it as conversible as themselves, but had never been able to teach it any other words than heigh-ho! The kittens were there, from the hour of their birth, more serious than old cats, who have, in other places, been the inseparable companions of antient virgins. There was not a lamb, colt, or any other creature, however youthful,
that

that did not walk with more solemnity than an Archbishop in a publick procession.

Poor Mrs. Herner was full as miserable as myself or any of the inhabitants: grief had so relaxed every muscle, that there were none but long faces in the house. Mrs. Herner's fell away very fast, and, I dare say, had we stayed a month longer would have come up to the general standard. I cannot but confess I felt mine lengthen considerably; tho' I was treated with great lenity by my goaler, who kindly studied my ease and convenience, as far as the place would permit; but kept as strictly to her vow of silence, as if it had been the road to salvation. The greatest indulgence she could grant me, was, in giving me leave to frequent a library, wherein I found some good histories. Here, when I could banish reflection, and the regret which was the consequence of it, I could, for some hours, enjoy the pleasures of society; and forgetting the lonely solitude to which I was confined, could transport myself to scenes of hurry and tumult,

tumult, and amuse myself with a constant course of novelty. But it was seldom I could bring myself into a proper temper to taste this pleasure; and the seldomer, as the dampness of the place, joined with vexation and anxiety, soon affected my health.

The country around us was all quagmires and bogs, which rendered it impossible to take any exercise at that season of the year, except in the melancholy garden; and though I had no objection to walking "with the" beast, joint tenant of the shade," yet I could not extend my love of society to the reptile likewise; and the garden was so over-run with frogs and toads, that it was impossible to walk there without having multitudes of them for companions. This total want of exercise, I suppose, had some small share in impairing my constitution, having been always used to a contrary way of life: I was so sensible of suffering from it, that nothing but experience could convince me that there was no possibility of going beyond the moat; however, having been almost swallowed
up

up in a bog, and giving my guard (for I was not permitted to stir without one) a violent cold, I had no great inclination for any further attempt; and less still was any one inclined to accompany me.

We had not been many days in our solitude, before we received a visit from Mr. South, a young clergyman in the neighbourhood; a very well bred, sensible, and worthy man, of an exceeding good family, and educated suitably to it; but being the younger of many brothers, he was glad to accept of a living near this place, though the manners of the neighbouring gentlemen were not agreeable to him. However, he conversed less with them than with his books, and the poor of the parish, whom he much visited in order to instruct and guide their minds, and learn and relieve their necessities; for he denied himself many of the gratifications of life, in order to communicate to others the conveniences and comforts which they could not afford themselves. He sacrificed his money to their indigence;

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C

and

and his time to their instruction; acting the part of schoolmaster to the children, as well as that of a truly spiritual guide to their parents. From one of such a disposition every visit must be welcome; and I could perceive, was not less so to Mrs. Hermer than myself; for she pressed him to repeat them, which he did as often as his leisure would permit; for to a man who so laboriously performs his duty, a large parish is almost a constant employ; and, tho' we might soon perceive, and, I was afterwards more fully convinced, that his pleasantest occupation was visiting us, yet would he not suffer it to break in upon his duty.

I have already observed that Mr. South's visits were agreeable, and your Ladyship will not think this so improbable as to require any farther assurance of it; but what will you say, if I own, that the love of talking rendered other company eligible, who had no other recommendation than taking the embargo off my speech, and suffering me to export a few thoughts,
with

with which I was overstocked? Depraved appetites are apt to have strange consequences; the love of talking, to those with whom we cannot converse, argues great depravity of mind, and the result of it was, that I rejoiced at the arrival of some country neighbours, of whose intended visit we had notice before they came, and as they were characters new and strange to me, I will give you the account of them, which I learnt from Mr. South after their departure, as some excuse for my being diverted with them; for novelty is allowed a right to entertain.

C H A P. XXXIII.

THE Marchioness of Trente was rendered a person of great consequence to the sportsmen in the neighbourhood, by the possession of a very extensive manor. And to the desire of courting her favour we owed the visits we received from three; by name, Mr. Rumford, Mr. Darking, and Mr. Giles. The two first were preceded by their wives, the latter by his wife and sister; for the gentlemen did not think a visit to two women a sufficient recompence for giving up their usual amusements, and therefore hunted all the way between their house and ours, which separated them from their families, who came early, to shew their desire of being good neighbours. Mrs. Giles, and her sister, Mrs. Martha Giles, sat next me, and the former being of a communicative temper, was grown so very intimate with me, that when the gentlemen came in, she was making me the confidant of her political sentiments, beginning by an enquiry after the new pamphlets that had been lately published;

lished; " for that the nation was now
" in such imminent danger of losing
" its liberty, that she could not help
" being very desirous to peruse all the
" schemes proposed towards redressing
" the grievances we laboured under;"
adding, that " an additional induce-
" ment was the hope that some of them
" might convince her sister into how
" many errors she was led by her at-
" tachment to a monarchical govern-
" ment, which intirely blinded her
" to all the blessings of a republic.
" Miss, would you believe," continued
this female politician, " that she is so
" strangely prejudiced, as to detest the
" character of the great, the glorious
" Oliver Cromwell; and will not allow
" there is any tolerable reasoning, or
" indeed any thing but impious blas-
" phemies, in the admirable books
" written to prove that killing a ty-
" rant is no murder. She grieves with
" all the solemnity of affliction every
" thirtieth of January, and is as incon-
" solable as if the person she most loves
" was just expired. Then, Miss, she
" is proportionably elated on the fatal
" day wherein the glorious thread of

C 3 " Cromwell's

“ Cromwell’s life was cut; and old
“ and asthmatical as you see her, sings
“ and dances like a distracted thing;
“ nor has complaisance enough to me
“ to conceal the least part of her joy,
“ though she knows my soul is then
“ overwhelmed with sorrow. Never
“ believe me, Miss, if her room is
“ not hung round with the pictures,
“ in her phrase, of the blessed martyrs,
“ and yet really, in other things, sister
“ Giles is a good sort of a woman;
“ and were it not for these prejudices,
“ which she has imbibed from the ser-
“ vile notions of those that educated
“ her, I should have been very happy
“ in her friendship; but ignorant of
“ the charms of glorious liberty, she is
“ as little able to bear my more exten-
“ sive view of things, as I am to endure
“ her narrowness of mind.”

Mr. Giles, it seems, knew his sister too well to be in doubt of the subject on which he saw her so very loquacious, and cried out, “ what, you’re teizing
“ Miss with your politics, I suppose;
“ what the devil have women to do
“ with the nation! You want a petti-
“ coat government, I warrant? Was I
“ King,

“ King, I would make an universal Sa-
“ lic law, that should not allow you
“ the government of your own lap-
“ dogs.”

“ Really brother,” replied Mrs. Mar-
tha, “ you but expose yourself by de-
“ claring your aversion to the most in-
“ teresting of subjects. However mean-
“ ly you may think of my sex, I must
“ inform you that my views are no-
“ bler than your’s; and if you are con-
“ tented to move in no higher a sphere
“ than the dominion over your stable
“ or dog-kennel, I find my genius
“ leads me to reflect on the best man-
“ ners of ruling a state; I cannot help
“ being anxious to see how things are
“ ordered at the helm.”

“ Helm!” exclaimed the Squire;
“ steer your family; see if you are
“ pilot enough to guide that in its
“ proper course. Go to your distaff;
“ the proper female sceptre. However
“ trifling you may think the command
“ of my dog-kennel, I would not trust
“ you with the government of it, though
“ I had not so valuable a bitch as Mop-
“ sey, who deserves the care of the
“ greatest man in the nation.”

C 4

With

With a look of the most sovereign contempt, as disdaining to return an answer, she turned her back to him, and whispered me, “ this is always
“ his way, Miss; would it not provoke a Saint? But this is the consequence of having an understanding more cultivated than the illiterate neighbourhood one has the misfortune to be born in; people totally ignorant of the policies of nations. Their pride will not allow one any peace. He does not treat sister Giles with any more ceremony, and, between you and I Miss (but one would not have those things repeated) she once resented this behaviour so much, that they were going to part upon it, and she and I were to have lived together, removing to some place where we might have conversed with persons of more refined understandings; but while they were bartering about the terms of a separate maintenance, a political dispute arose between her and myself, which convinced me so fully of the impossibility of ever bringing her to reason on that
“ subject,

“ subject, that I declared against living with her, and a reconciliation between them ensued.”

I know not when my political friend would have done talking, had she not been interrupted by Mrs. Darking, who came up to me, and enquired after the reigning diversions in London; expressing great joy at seeing one “ who was come from among christians, and compassionating me for having left them for a land of brutes.”

Mrs. Herner, before any company came, advised me on no account to mention my being brought thither by force? but to pretend that a desire of accompany her, during her stay there, was my motive. Though I was sensible my taste would not receive much honour from this concealment, yet, as it was my interest not to offend her, and I perceived no advantage likely to accrue from refusing to comply, I told her, that as far as silence would give my detention the air of choice, I had no objection; but she must excuse my intimating a falsehood, much more my telling a palpable untruth. I now found she took this

C 5

office

office on herself; for upon hearing Mrs. Darking's condolences, she told her
" I was not worthy her pity, since I
" had been so kind as to give her my
" company from the desire of retiring
" from the hurry of London."

This gave Mr. Darking an opportunity of exultation, crying out, " there's
" a wise young woman now! So much
" wisdom in youth is marvellous.
" What a happy man her husband will
" be, if marriage does not alter her
" as much as it did my fool. See Betty, how much a *betterer* figure that
" young gentlewoman makes than
" thee do with all thy whims, thy fancies, and nonsensical fancies and
" whinings."

Mrs. Darking answered with an indolent air, " that the young Lady
" would be a better judge of her own
" taste, when she had lived a little
" among brutes." With a contemptuous smile and significant glance, which very intelligibly told him he was signified under the last word of her speech.

This Lady, I afterwards learnt, had been bred in town; where, for a punishment

nishment of his sins, Mr. Darking was called by a law suit, in which he was engaged with a gentleman who had hunted and killed a hare in his manor.

While he was in London, he met with this lady, who, destitute of fortune, lived with a maiden aunt, of a temper by no means easy, and whose sole support was an annuity. The necessity of finding some more certain provision made her omit no endeavours to please; and so general were her views, that her sentiments changed with every unmarried man's opinion; whatever he seemed to like she immediately became.

This conformable disposition led her to declare a detestation of a town life, whenever Mr. Darking was in company; and so successfully did she expatiate on the sweet innocence and tranquil regularity enjoyed in the country, that he was convinced her conformity to the gaieties of London was a painful necessity, from which she sighed to be delivered. He had been a good deal captivated by her beauty, from the first time he had seen her,
and

and this amiable disposition compleated her conquest. But still warily determined to be certain of the happiness, which he was inclined to think must be the consequence of his possessing such a wife, he examined into her knowledge of family affairs, and was charmed to hear her talk of the inspecting a dairy, and the well ordering a family, as the greatest pleasures in life, and as things in which she was well skilled. All his doubts being dispelled, he ventured to make his proposals; and thro' meer œconomy overlooked her want of fortune. He had been early taught that wholesome precept, that "a penny saved is a penny got;" and learnedly arguing on that principle, convinced himself that so good a housewife was the best treasure, since no extraordinary settlements were demanded in consideration of a woman's virtues; and therefore his estate would not be tied up as if he married a great fortune; and from hence he drew a conclusion in her favour, that, "money saved was money got."

Mr.

Mr. Darking was not made to wait long for the Lady's consent: they had proverbs on their side, as much in recommendation of a speedy marriage, as he had; there was no text on which the old aunt was more eloquent than "that delays are dangerous;" "those that will not when they may, &c." "A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush," and some others to that purpose; mortifying experience having so fully convinced her of the justness of them, that she rivalled the renowned Sancho Pancho in retailing of proverbs. As soon as Mr. Darking was married, he conducted his bride to the country for which he had sighed; where he found that reflection is so infallible a source of wisdom, that he might have acquired some from his favourite amusements, which would have taught him that the fowler never spreads the nets after having caught the birds. All the snares she laid for him appeared henceforward useless: art was now disclaimed; she freely shewed her dislike of every thing she had declared herself fond of; laughed
at

at his friends, despised his neighbours, detested country entertainments, never thought of œconomy, but to shew she scorned such trifles and low offices, and grew vapoured and peevish.

Mr. Darking was not so blinded by love, but that he grew outrageous at this disappointment; for however blind Cupid may be represented, the Hymeneal torch lights him so well, as to render him admirably quick-sighted to the faults of a wedded mate. Cupid, as your Ladyship must have perceived, in many instances, before he becomes linked by Hymen, is generally as different from what he is after that union, as a bee and a serpent: in the first state, his whole application is to gather sweets from every thing; there is not a circumstance but he can make to produce something valuable; but, after this melancholy change, he as industriously collects poison; and, in the smallest trifles can discover baleful qualities. If I was to undergo a metamorphosis, it should be of a bee into a serpent, as an allegorical description of the transformation of a lover into a hus-

a husband ; a more dismal change than that of the industrious Arachne into a spider, the melancholy Philomela into a plaintive nightingale, or any other that Ovid celebrates. But to put an end to a digression which no one, from her own fate, has so little reason to make as myself, I shall return to this ill-matched pair.

As Mr. Darking was not blessed with delicacy of voice or manners, his rage broke forth into sounds so harsh, and gestures so alarming, as greatly terrified the gentle Lady, and made her determine to endeavour to comply with his inclination. But, during the trial, his dairy was spoiled through neglect and ignorance ; his family and visitors half-starved ; for which he received no other apology than “ how should she “ guess that the vulgar robust animals “ would devour whole hecatombs ;” and all regularity was banished from his house ; the order for dinner being often forgot till the time it should have been ready.—He tried to make her useful by the same means as he had brought her to attempt to obey him, but

but finding it easier to fright than to alter her, he gave her up as incorrigible; desiring her to resign the management of his house, and keep within the confines of her own apartment.

Not long after this, Mrs. Darking proved with child, which restored her to her husband's favour, as it shewed her of some use. She perceived, by his behaviour, how much he was interested in the fate of the unborn babe, and therefore made it the means of acquiring some indulgencies which otherwise would not have been granted to her. She daily encroached on the liberties thus obtained, till, at last, she ventured to express a longing to lie-in in London, which, if disappointed, she feared might prove fatal to the child. Mr. Darking would have been truly alarmed had he believed it could be marked with the representation of any part of a town he so much hated; but never having heard of that effect from any such longing, he refused to comply, swearing "no child
" of his should breathe that pernicious
" air; he had suffered enough by go-
" ing

“ing thither to make him careful to
“be the last of his family who should
“ever run themselves into any such
“scrape.” But finding his lady sick-
ened, from the steadiness with which
he had adhered to this resolution, he
began to be under some apprehensions
for the consequences; so to make her
easier, he promised to carry her there
as soon as she was recovered from her
lying-in. This assurance kept up her
spirits so well, that it enabled her to
bring into the world a fine boy, who
was joyfully received by his father;
but the journey to London expired at
the child’s birth. It was a promise
Mr. Darking never meant to keep, nor
could he be induced to perform it
by her falling ill on the disappoint-
ment; her health was no longer of im-
portance.

She had several more children; but
found that her pregnancy was not to
meet with the same indulgencies after
the valuable heir apparent was born.
Mr. Darking had the children brought
up wild. Though the two youngest
were daughters, yet he would not per-
mit

mit a maid servant to come near them, except just to put on their cloaths; the greatest part of their time was spent in the stables, and the stable-boys were their play-fellows.

The poor wife, who was in the contrary extreme, being the excess of delicacy, and thought a girl ought not to set eyes even on a baby that was not of the feminine gender, looked on compliance in this point as criminal; from which arose a never ceasing contest between her and her husband, whereby the children were the innocent sufferers. Each ordered them to rebel against the commands of the other; she chastised them if they obeyed their father, and he (as he called it) *trounced* them, if they complied with their mother; till, by the double application of that great instructor, the rod, they soon grew so exceeding wise, as to despise both their parents, learning from each the other's foibles and errors much sooner than their own understandings could have discovered them.

Mrs. Rumford, the only Lady that now remains unmentioned, was much better

better suited to her situation. Nature seemed to have formed her for the care of her house and dairy; and had not Mr. Rumford declared her to be the wife of his bosom, one might have taken her for his cook or his dairy-maid; though poetry has been so much the friend of the latter class, that to have guessed her one would have been no small compliment. She was as much charmed with my supposed love of the country as Mr. Darking, and was very eloquent in behalf of the pleasures of domestick business. My regard for truth would scarcely suffer me to receive the praises given me with so little reason; and I believe I should not have permitted them to continue in their error, could I have prevailed on myself to have exposed any one to so much contempt as I imagined Mrs. Herner must have incurred from being convicted of telling a voluntary lie.

C H A P.

C H A P. XXXIV.

A VERY considerable part of the company yet remains unmentioned, though perhaps were the men to direct, I might have given them the precedence. These were the Squires faithful companions, their dogs, who followed them into the room, which they entered with a loud cry of halloo, halloo! that at first greatly alarmed me; but seeing no emotion in the countenance of any other person in company, and finding Mrs. Martha did not suspend her cares for the nation, I was sensible my fears must be groundless. Mrs. Herner knew too well the regard due to these dogs to expel them from her dining room; the consequence of which was, its being so filled with them, that there was no moving without treading upon one, falling over another, and making confusion among them all, they snarling and growling at every one who was so unlucky as to tread on them; while the Squires,
to

to increase the clamour, cried out, ware Hector, ware Juno! according to the names of the dogs in danger.

Dinner at last appeared; at the sight of a sirloin of beef, the Squire set up what I found they called the dead halloo, and cried out, "to-un boys, to-un; the best beast in Christendom, though he would give but a scurvy chase;" and while the ladies were ceremoniously adjusting the important article of place, sat themselves at the table observing, that "the first cut of a sirloin of beef was better than the finest compliments in the world." As soon as dinner was ended, the chase was celebrated, the stag once more run down, all its arts for escape remembered, the victory of the dogs sung in songs of triumph, every victor receiving his distinct praises and caresses. When the stag was killed in story, as well as in fact, and all the songs on the subject had been sung, with voices that equalled the hoarse thunder, one of the gentlemen whispered another, "let's roast the parson," to which his neighbour replied, sealing his approbation

bation with an oath, " I will begin to
" run the rig on him." And accordingly much impertinence was applied to Mr. South, by way of wit, which he received with great insensibility, only giving them two or three very cutting answers in return; but his wit being too refined, and too just to be comprehended by them, Mrs. Herner, who I began to perceive was more than commonly affected with Mr. South's merit, thought it time to retire, asking him to drink tea with us. He readily consented; and rising from table with us, they cried out, " fine
" parson! efaith, always stick by the
" women. Nay, thou hast a good
" taste; she's worth a chace!" " but
" take care thee does not catch a tar-
" tar," added Mr. Darking. Every one understood me to be the person hinted at in this speech, which rendered me the more glad to leave these ungentlemanlike gentlemen. As soon as we were out of the room, they set up another halloo, crying, " clear, clear!" which informed us, that they were not less rejoiced at our absence than we were

were at having got rid of such irrational society.

Mr. South told me that we had judged very well in retiring so soon, for the next step towards driving us out of the room would have been their entering into such discourse as no women of modesty could without great impropriety sit to hear. This greatly astonished me; I did not suspect any person of such brutality; I thought politeness was not requisite to teach people decency; common sense alone, I imagined, might shew that it was brutal to say what any one ought not to hear. But more still have I been since surprized, at finding this vice; for I cannot give a breach of so amiable a virtue as modesty a gentler name, was too common in circles that call themselves polite; but surely without reason, since nothing can be so contrary to politeness as an offence against decency. Our visitors did not leave us till the gentlemen were so far overpowered by the potency of Mrs. Herner's good October, that they were with difficulty set upon their horses; but those

those animals, much superior to the brutes that rode them, conveyed their unworthy loads safe home.

Your Ladyship, perhaps, by this time may find it easy to be tired of such company, therefore will not wonder if I did not wish them to repeat their visits often, as when they ceased to be new they must become more dull than solitude.

After a month spent in this old castle, I began to grow impatient of confinement, and almost to despair of making my escape; but my uneasiness was still greatly increased one morning, by Mrs. Herne's shewing me a letter from the Marchioness, in which she related to her, as she termed it, "the happy consequence of removing me out of Lord Dorchester's sight." She there informed her, that "he looked melancholy for a few days after my departure; but soon began, by degrees, to recover his gaiety, and with it, his inclination towards her. Convinced, by experience, how little he liked reserve in a woman he loved, she had not endeavoured to conceal
" the

“ the sentiments of her heart ;” and
“ they so well agreed with his, that in
“ a few days they were to be married,
“ waiting only for the necessary prepa-
“ rations.” She then proceeded to say,
“ that she was no longer under any un-
“ easiness concerning me ; a thousand
“ instances having assured her that Lord
“ Dorchester was become totally indif-
“ ferent towards my future fate ; and
“ had even expressed himself glad that
“ he was delivered, he knew not how,
“ of one who began to grow burden-
“ some to him. But yet, as she pitied
“ my youth, and was sensible how hard
“ it must be for an unexperienced girl
“ to resist such a man as Lord Dorches-
“ ter, it grieved her heart (*too full of*
“ *the milk of human kindness*) to think
“ I should be left quite destitute of a
“ subsistence, exposed to the wide world
“ and all its villainy, which might lead
“ me into courses that would prove the
“ destruction of my *precious soul*. She
“ therefore could not forbear giving
“ way to the overflowings of her hu-
“ manity, generosity and compassion,
“ in offering me the same income which
VOL. II. D “ she

“ she had tendered me before I left
“ London, if I would bind myself, by
“ a lawful contract, to relinquish it if I
“ came within 40 miles of London, or
“ of his Lordship’s country seat; for
“ tho’ she was no longer jealous, yet
“ she could not bear to see Lord Dor-
“ chester’s happiness interrupted by the
“ whining complaints or reproaches of
“ a woman who would call herself ru-
“ ined by him, tho’ her own frailty was
“ most in fault.”

The shock this letter gave me, was at first inexpressible. I could not support the very sound of Lord Dorchester’s indifference. I knew not how to believe he was weary of me. I thought no one could dissemble so well; for he had appeared more fond of me, more delighted with me than ever, but just before this cruel separation. My mind was in too great an agitation to return Mrs. Her-ner any answer. She seemed to pity me, for my distress was very visible, and would have bestowed upon me a lecture on patience and resignation, had she been allowed the liberty of speech; but after a very eloquent beginning, she
was

was stopped short by recollecting the Marchioness's prohibition, and observed, "her compassion had led her into forgetfulness."

I was never so well pleased with Lady Trente's commands as on this occasion; a person who is deeply afflicted can but ill bear the dull insipid nonsense of an insensible preacher; when the heart speaks loudly, who can listen to a discourse dictated by a cold imagination. I prevailed on Mrs. Herner to give me Lady Trente's letter; and, after having renewed the first agonies of my grief by a second perusal, a plentiful flood of tears came to my relief, and so far quieted my mind, that I began to discover reasons to suspect the truth of this account. I was little disposed to believe the Marchioness was so very full of the *milk of human kindness* as she pretended, nor that one who had so little consideration for the ease of my body, and the peace of my mind in this world, could have so tender a regard for my soul, and my happiness in the next. The desire of buying my absence from Lord Dorchester, was a suspicious circumstance;

D 2

and

and I thought this all might be a fiction formed on a supposition that my aim was to marry my Lord, and therefore I might the more readily comply with her proposals, if I could be persuaded all possibility of the completion of my hopes were at an end.

This scheme, like all others that are built on false foundations, could not answer the intent. My views were narrower, and more humble; I thought not of marriage; to preserve his friendship and enjoy his conversation was the utmost extent of my ambition; and this I flattered myself I might do, should another woman become his wife. But I must, in sincerity, confess, that the notion of his marrying was most tormenting to me. To be his friend while no one had a stronger tie on his affections, satisfied my wishes; but if he had a wife, I was sensible I ought to resign even the desire of retaining the first place in his heart. This was a self-denial that required a stronger mind or weaker affection than I possessed.

The declining state of my health would have rendered me little able to support

support the anxiety of my mind, had not the hopes I conceived that the whole was a fiction, proved a most reviving cordial to my spirits. This restored me to life, tho' not to ease; but my fears and doubts made me more grieved than ever at my captivity; and as my impatience for the means of escaping from this prison was encreased, it was mortifying to me to give an answer to the Marchioness's proposals, which would rather quicken than relax Mrs. Herner's watchfulness. This, I knew, must be the consequence of a refusal; but obliged to declare myself, what could I do? My desire of liberty inspired me with courage enough to dare any thing but a violation of truth; there I was still a coward; for I could not think myself justified in repelling wickedness by wickedness. The falshood of others could not be a sanction for it in me.

Mrs. Herner, at last, broke thro' her vow of silence, in order to use all the arguments her understanding could suggest, and her inclination strengthen, to persuade me to accept the conditions

D 3

offered

offered me. The goaler, in this case, led as melancholy a life as the prisoner, and she longed almost as much to be dismissed from her charge as I did to be out of her power. The poor woman was half dead of the vapours, and, I believe, would not have survived it had not Mr. South's company afforded her relief; for whenever he appeared she was as happy as envy of the particular attention he paid to me could suffer her to be; and tho' I would not, in general, recommend jealousy as very conducive to mental or bodily health, yet it certainly would be of great service in a situation that stagnates the blood, without some such animating passion to continue its circulation.

I could not but confess it was pity that "one who spoke so well, should ever speak in vain;" but what success could attend it, had she been endowed with the most persuasive eloquence: an orator places his hopes in moving our passions, and to make them of his party is his sole aim; it is no affront, therefore, to her rhetoric, that it

it should fail, when it was directed against the most invincible passion. After the good woman had talked herself hoarse, I repeated what I had first told her, "that no offers could tempt me to sell Lord Dorchester's friendship; but if I was permitted to judge for myself, and found him in reality as indifferent as the Marchioness represented him, I should fly far enough from one whose inconstancy must render the sight of him painful, without putting her to any expence."

I thought her Ladyship in a great error, when she supposed poverty might prove so dangerous to the state of my soul; I did not comprehend her meaning; and as far as I had been able to observe, luxury led people into more vices than necessity. Experience had then shewn me, that

The devil, grown wiser than of yore,
Tempts men by making rich, not poor.

D 4

I was

I was under no apprehension that want of virtue could be the consequence of want of money, and, therefore, saw no sufficient inducement to accept any from one who had so cruelly injured me.

C H A P.

C H A P. VI.

MR. South had omitted writing to us for more days than usual; having, as we learned, been prevented by a friend who had spent a little time with him; but during this increase of my anxiety, he came one morning to breakfast; his particular enquiries after my health, shewed me that he perceived an alteration in it. The day being fine, we went together into the garden, where we had not walked long, when he intimated a desire to speak with Mrs. Herner alone. His countenance had shewn confusion, his thoughts wandered, and his conversation had been strained and unconnected from the time of his first coming in. I pitied him, from a belief that he laboured under some uneasiness; and pains of the mind could not then fail of exciting my compassion. I was now more convinced that he had some distress to impart; and having heard him whisper his request for a private audience, I walked

D 5

from

from them, and thinking myself at a sufficient distance, sat down at the bottom of an old yew tree, which time had rendered hollow, and frequently served me for a well sheltered seat.

But, as the God of Laughter would have it, Mrs. Herner brought her gentleman to a bench full in my view. I observed her eyes rather twinkling than sparkling, every feature wore a smile, and she had pulled up her head till she was as upright as a may-pole.

After they were seated, and she had blushed, drawn down her handkerchief, stroaked her ruffles, pinched her apron, and played over all the pretty airs of confusion, finding he did not break silence, she, as I could perceive, with great hesitation and difficulty, enquired his reason for desiring this interview; her words were breathed in a voice too gentle for me to hear, but her manner explained them.

Mr. South did not seem to speak with more facility, nor in a sound more audible. I could not divine his meaning, but saw him confounded, and in a tremor; however, the first effort passed,

passed, he grew more easy ; but in proportion as his countenance expressed greater pleasure, her's shewed less. His eyes petitioned ; but as his became more tender and humble, her's shot forth fiercer rays, her cheeks glowed with a higher red, and losing all that sweet complacency of feature with which she at first listened to him, she rose from her seat, and anger giving strength to her voice, I could very distinctly hear her thus address him :
“ Is this the mighty secret for which
“ you wanted a private audience ?
“ You did well, indeed, to desire it
“ private ; such an abject thought
“ should be known by as few as possible. In love in so short a time !
“ and with a baby face ; a little white
“ and red, and perhaps some pretty
“ features ! A child, not able to know
“ the duties incumbent on a wife and
“ the mistress of a house ! To marry
“ her would disgrace your family, contaminate your profession, dishonour
“ your cloth, and bring certain ruin
“ on yourself. Such wilful blindness
“ deserves not a guide ; but I will be
“ one

“ one to you, and preserve you from
“ the perdition you court.”

Mr. South interrupted her at this expression of unwished-for regard; I could not distinguish his words, but he had the air of a most melancholy and humble suppliant, which proved unavailing, for Mrs. Herner again broke forth. “ Fye, fye; is it seemly for one
“ whose example and preaching should
“ teach the world to mortify and deny
“ themselves, to overcome their passions? Is it decent for such a one
“ to chuse a wife for a little transitory
“ beauty? What will people say when
“ you are exhorting them to abstinence; but that, after having provided every gratification for yourself, after indeed abstaining from all
“ that is less tempting, and thinking
“ it virtue, you triumph over them
“ who practice less self-indulgence,
“ tho’, perhaps, more lawfully? Does
“ not your profession teach you to
“ search after more sublime beauties;
“ those of the mind? Moral charms
“ alone should be regarded by a minister of our sacred religion. Has
“ not,

“ not the wise Solomon told you, that
“ favour is deceitful, and beauty is vain,
“ but the woman that feareth the Lord,
“ she shall be praised? Does he not
“ say, that the price of a virtuous wo-
“ man is above rubies? Such you
“ might have found,” softening her
voice; “ you might have met with wo-
“ men who have been tried in the world,
“ like gold in the fire, and passed thro’
“ it unfullied; whose minds are formed
“ by a competence of years, and their
“ hearts purified by knowledge and
“ care; who have been taught by ex-
“ perience to value true merit” (casting
glances at him which she designed should
be languishing, but seemed more expres-
sive of stupidity); “ one qualified to be
“ friend, companion, and help-mate;
“ one who would nurse you when sick,
“ obey you when well, and live up to
“ a true sense of her duty; and all this
“ with rank and family that would not
“ have debased you in the eyes of the
“ world. This, I say, you might have
“ found.” And here she stopped, as if
to see whether a description she meant
for her own picture, would warm him to
any kind thoughts of the original; but
he,

he, with some indignation in his countenance, answered, " I think I have
" found it all in your friend ; I have too
" much faith in physiognomy to doubt
" it ; her's expresses every thing that is
" amiable in the most legible and charming characters." " I see what you are," interrupted Mrs. Herner, with a voice still louder than before ; " the man gets
" the better of your divine soul ; we may
" now no longer wonder that the sheep
" wander out of the right path, since
" the shepherd himself goes astray ; and
" tho' obliged to purify human nature,
" is sinking to the brute, and not only
" withdrawing himself from his obedience to religion, but even to reason.
" While you are thus a slave to your
" appetites, continued she, you are below the beasts of the field, and as
" such, not fit company for me ; but I
" shall take care to lead temptation out
" of your way, since you have not sufficiency of virtue to resist it. You
" shall no more see this painted baby,
" this fleshly idol, now the sole object
" of your devotion." With this menace she left him ; nor did he endeavour to detain her, but seemed all amazement.

I sat

I sat still, in hopes of remaining unobserved. I suspected myself to be meant under the flattering appellation of painted baby, that pernicious evil she had been describing, and had no desire to reverse her sentence, though I esteemed the man. But passing by the place where I sat, he perceived me, and coming up with great confusion in his manner, would have sat down by me. I had been detained there too long, from a desire of being concealed, and was grown very cold, therefore chose to walk. With great difficulty he stammered out, " he had been entreating Mrs. Hernier to offer him and his fortune to me. He feared I should accuse him of presumption if he attempted to make so poor an offering without the mediation of a friend; but she had reduced him to it, for he had no hopes of her assistance." He then gave me an exact account of his fortune and income, saying every thing that was tender, generous and delicate on the subject, with such fear and humility, that I was grieved at being obliged to humble him still more,
by

by a refusal, which, however, I endeavoured to palliate as much as possible. "I acknowledged the obligation; his good opinion conferred on me; assuring him of my esteem; but, that I could not think of marriage; were not this a literal truth, he might be sure I should not except to his offer; for my situation was extremely unhappy; but I could not change it for the married state, tho' I was there, a prisoner, most unjustly seized by force, and detained against my will with the utmost vigilance and care."

While I was uttering these last words, Mrs. Herne appeared, and with a degree of rage not natural to her disposition (but jealousy can work wonders) inquired, "what I meant by remaining in the garden?" commanding me to go into the house. I was so shocked with the concern I had given Mr. South, which he seemed rather to endeavour to conceal than to shew, that I was glad to obey her; but he catching hold of my hand, entreated me to finish what I was saying, and explain a mystery which filled him with astonishment

ment. I easily understood that by this he meant the imprisonment I had slightly touched upon; but I could not make a farther explanation before Mrs. Her-ner, nor did she give me time; for telling him, that "it was unbecoming a minister of the gospel to give way to his passions," she led me into the house, out of which I was not suffered to stir that day.

Mrs. Herner had never beheld me with such looks of anger as she gave me after this affair; she was frequently in tears; and made me partake of her sorrow, by being the victim of her ill humour. Her jealousy added so much to the cruel effects of the Marchioness's commands, that I was so strictly watched (at a time when I more than ever longed for liberty in order to examine into the truth of Lady Trente's letter) that three days passed before the gardener, who had been bribed into Mr. South's interest, could give me the following letter:

"MADAM,

"Though you deny me the hopes
of reward, you have not deprived me
of

to have assisted me in my escape; and yet where to go without a guide, if I got clear from the castle, I knew not. These considerations distressed me. They might have been obviated by putting myself under Mr. South's protection; but how could I make a man of his worth subservient to my interest, and disappoint him of the reward which no generosity could prevent his hoping from such a service; tho' it might not suffer him to press what he would think, in gratitude; his due. I could not procure my own gratification but by his disappointment; and my first resolution was to write him an answer, which I will, as nearly as my memory will permit, repeat to your Ladyship.

“ How ardently soever I may wish
 “ for liberty, I cannot consent to re-
 “ ceive it from one to whom I can make
 “ no return. No captivity can be so
 “ grievous to me as the sense of obli-
 “ gations which it will never be in my
 “ power to repay. I must intreat you
 “ not to deliver me from my imprison-
 “ ment, to fetter me with ingratitude;
 “ nor to add any farther proofs of a re-
 “ gard

“gard, I so little deserve. Your gene-
“rous and kind intentions can never be
“effaced from my memory; nor shall
“I ever cease to wish your happiness
“and prosperity may be equal to your
“merit, and the just sense I have of it:
“I can never give you a right to ex-
“pect a heart, which it is not in my
“power to give, and to which your
“merits alone are too good a title.”

When I delivered this epistle to the gardener, he informed me that Mr. South had made several unsuccessful attempts to see me; and finding them vain, had applied to him to deliver me his letter; adding many other things in order to move my compassion, by the uneasiness under which he represented him, or to please me by describing symptoms of an affection in Mr. South; which from my readiness to enter into a correspondence, I suppose, he thought very agreeable to me.

I listened patiently, for fear of offending a man from whom I hoped to receive the blessing of liberty; but did not dare to venture a hint of my design at that time, lest it should be delivered
to

to Mr. South with my letter, and I be obliged to him, contrary to my inclination.

I had the good fortune to meet with the gardener alone the next day : he told me he had given my epistle to Mr. South, who seemed so sorry, poor gentleman, it grieved his heart to see him. Time was too precious for me to suffer him to spend it in expressing his compassion ; I therefore offered the bribe I intended, and promised secrecy and prudence.

The man seemed strongly charmed with the sight of the gold which I exposed to his view in order to strengthen the temptation, and he engaged to answer my hopes, if it could be contrived without his being discovered as a party in it, and assured me of using his utmost endeavour to effect it. We agreed on an hour of meeting again, when he should be able to impart his success ; I charged him to keep the affair a secret from Mr. South ; and we parted with a great increase of content on both sides, he enjoying, in imagination, the offered gold, and I my liberty.

C H A P.

C H A P. VII.

MRS. Herner's vigilance would not suffer me to hear the gardener's success at the time appointed; but I was too industrious in seeking an opportunity of speaking, to be long prevented, and I had the inexpressible joy to learn that he had formed a practicable scheme. I listened with eagerness to every particular; but when I found my first step was to be on a ladder, I confess I trembled. As the doors were all most securely locked every night, he told me " he saw no hope of my
" escaping that way, and the rooms
" being very high, I was raised so far
" from the ground, tho' I lay only on
" the first floor, that he had no ladder
" that would reach above half-way to
" my window. This induced him to
" associate a young carpenter in the
" execution of his scheme, whom he
" found as sensible of the charms of
" gold as himself. They agreed to
" join two of their longest ladders together, and thro' favor of the night
" place them at my window, from
" whence I was to descend into the
garden.

“ garden. The same means were to
“ be used to convey me and themselves
“ over the garden wall, the key of the
“ garden being delivered every night
“ to Mrs. Herner. Horses were to be
“ ready in waiting, and the young car-
“ penter was to be my conductor till
“ I arrived at a town where I could
“ procure an easier way of travelling.”

The gardener had in charge, after having conveyed the ladder over the wall, to carry them into the carpenter's shop, there to disunite them, to avoid suspicion, if a search was made, and then returning over the part of the wall, which some private excursions had taught him to climb, he could go into his own bed-chamber without any impediment, as the windows of it opened into the garden, and it was on the ground floor.

This scheme, he assured me, nothing could frustrate but a noise being made in the execution of it, which must alarm the family.

I thought they shewed more care of themselves than of me; to descend from so great a height, down a pieced ladder, in a dark night, appeared very terrible
in

in my eyes ; and riding on horseback, a thing I had never attempted, and that too in darkness, was not less dreadful ; but my desire of liberty was so strong, that it overcame my fears, and I punctually observed all their directions. The appointed hour found me watching at my window ; my guide was punctual ; and with trembling steps I left a place I detested. But my joy was greatly clouded with fear, till, after riding the whole night, at break of day I arrived at a town, where I was informed I might get more suitable means of conveyance. The night had favoured my project no other way than by wrapping all nature in darkness, and all the inhabitants of our castle in sleep ; for the rains beat, and the winds blew ; and when I got to the inn I was entirely wet thro' my clothes, my body perishing with cold, and my heart chilled with fear. My guide had lent me a great coat ; but the rain had penetrated that long before we arrived at our journey's end ; and it became only an additional fatigue to me, by the great weight it acquired from the rain it had imbibed.

VOL. II.

E

In

In this condition I would have proceeded on my journey, tho' I was almost dead, had not the landlady insisted on my going to bed, to receive some refreshment from the two things I wanted, warmth and rest. I was as little able to contend with her advice, as to pursue my own intention; and thro' weakness, more than inclination, obeyed. Before I retired to my room, I would have dismissed the young carpenter; but he positively refused to leave the place till he had seen how I did after my rest. This humane attention surprized me, in one to whom I was a stranger, as I had not met with the like from people who had more reason to regard me; and I could' not but feel myself obliged to him for this action, tho' I was afraid he might open his heart with the liquor the inn afforded, and betray the whole affair. I did not fear it should be by that means frustrated, but I could not like to be the subject of discourse among such a set of people.

These thoughts, however, could not disturb the rest I so much wanted; and after a sleep of some hours I awaked greatly

greatly refreshed, and determined to prosecute my journey directly. While the chariot was getting ready, breakfast was brought me; and with it came my guide to enquire after my health. I thanked him for his good-natured concern, and expressed a fear that I had inconveniently detained him from his business; but he assured me that was of no consequence; adding, "I durst not, for my life, my
 " Lady, have left you, till I could give
 " a *betterer* account to Mr. South; alack,
 " I warrant he will be main glad to hear
 " you set out from the house so pure
 " *boddy* and *sprack*; he will have fretted
 " *knugeously* at the night's being so bad;
 " for he was so *timbersome*, about your
 " being cold that he made me take his
 " warmest great coat for to put about
 " you."

Surprized at this address, "I en-
 " quired what he meant by Mr. South;
 " I apprehended he knew nothing of
 " my flight?"

"Ah, Lord, do you think naw,"
 continued the carpenter, "our silly
 " heads could have fancied this fine
 " plot our own selves? No, no, master

“ gardener knowing Mr. Parson to be
“ your sweet heart, went and told him
“ what you had said toun, and *as how*
“ you had ordered that he should not be
“ telled of it. Mr. Parson bidun not
“ say nothing of having letun into his
“ *conferdence*, and having sent for me,
“ and tried as whether I was willing to
“ act my part, what do he do but write
“ us the plot down, come to my house
“ and see that I had fastened the lad-
“ ders tightly together, that they might
“ not throw you a fall; lent me his own
“ horse, because it is as quiet and as
“ sure-footed as one of us christians, and
“ then gave me this letter for you.
“ My mind gives me, that this will tell
“ you all; but I does love to tell news,
“ so I was bent on telling you all my-
“ self.”

I opened the letter with a mixture of
curiosity and uneasiness. It contained
but few lines, which were to acquaint
me, that, “ to prove he deserved a
“ better opinion than I entertained of
“ him, when I imagined he would want
“ a reward for any service he could ren-
“ der me, he had done every thing in
“ his

“ his power to favour my escape, and
“ would have guarded me in it, had
“ not my charge of secrecy to the
“ agent I had chosen, as well as my
“ letter to him, plainly shewn that his
“ presence and assistance would be
“ highly disagreeable to me. That he
“ wished he could have contrived to
“ have set me at liberty with more ease
“ to myself, but hoped success would
“ amply recompence me for every dif-
“ ficulty.” He ended by the warmest
wishes of happiness, adding, “ that he
“ would not ask for leave to be a spec-
“ tator of it, by begging permission
“ to wait on me in London, fear-
“ ing that I was so averse to him, that
“ he could not enjoy that pleasure,
“ without its being painful to me;
“ and he would rather suffer the most
“ sensible affliction all his life, than
“ give me an hour’s disquiet; nor was
“ he worthy to know the occasion of my
“ being confined in that old mansion;
“ and indeed he should be afraid to learn
“ it, was not his despair already arrived
“ to the utmost excess.”

E 3

I should

I should have thought myself inexcusably ungrateful, had I not written a few lines to return my thanks for his generous assistance; to which I added an assurance, that I should be always glad to see him whenever his affairs would permit his coming to London; but thro' inadvertency, forgot to give him a direction which might enable him to find me. With this letter I dispatched my guide, and got into the chariot.

Tho' my situation was easier than before, yet my mind was far from enjoying peace; every step that brought me nearer London, increased my anxiety; I trembled to enquire what I wanted to know; and the meer possibility of finding the Marchioness's account true, for I often flattered myself that it could scarcely be called a probability, made me wretched. The only source from which I hoped to receive any consolation was returning to my kind aunt and her peaceful cottage; her wise instructions, and tender indulgence, I hoped, might, in time, heal my mind, and restore me to something like tranquility; for real peace, I believed, would never
more

more enter my heart, should this fatal change prove real. If indifference were to incline Lord Dorchester to avoid me, yet justice, I thought, must lead him to inform me in what part of the kingdom my aunt inhabited, a circumstance he had hitherto kept from my knowledge. These were the reflections of my most melancholy hours, which grew more frequent as I approached the place where I had so ardently longed to be. My apprehensions increased so fast, that fair hope could scarcely find time to smile on my black imaginations.

Between this anxiety of mind, and the fatigue of my journey, I was not half animated when I got into town; but as I could not forego my impatient desire to see Lord Dorchester, while a spark of life remained, I ordered to be driven to his house, and made the coachman let me out before the servant (in less haste than I was) came to the door, and I was ready to enter, as soon as it was opened.

I enquired for Lord Dorchester with an eager wildness, which I saw surprized them; one answered, " he was

E 4

" not

“not at home,” while another went into the parlour, and, I could hear, pronounced my name. My Lord’s voice soon informed me that it was to him he spoke; for he, rising suddenly from his seat, as I could plainly distinguish, cried out, “Good God! is it possible! where is she?” but with a lower voice, added; “why should I ask where she is? I can never see her more. Keep her from me; and bid her avoid the man whom she has so cruelly injured, and fear the effects of his resentment.”

As soon as he spoke, I exclaimed, with the eagerness of distraction, “I hear, I hear his voice! why do you refuse to let me see him?” and endeavoured to force my way into the room where he was; but the servants stopped me, and held me fast. This was not long necessary; for his words more effectually deprived me of the power of motion, and for some time afforded me relief, by reducing me to almost a total insensibility.

When I recovered my scattered thoughts, I desired to have a chair called;

called ; the servants unwillingly obeyed me, being moved with the condition I was in ; they would have persuaded me to wait a farther recovery ; and when they found all they could say was unavailing, each intreated me to permit him to see me safe home ; but I equally rejected them all ; charging them not to offend, on my account, so good a master, who, it was plain, would be displeased with any regard shewn to one whom he was determined to abandon. “ They insisted, that they were
“ sure he could not be angry at the re-
“ spect and concern which they must
“ be brutes not to feel for me, whatso-
“ ever he might think proper to do
“ himself.” But I would not suffer any of them to attend me, tho’, I confess, I received some satisfaction from seeing they retained a regard for me, independent of their master’s. Gratitude will give us pleasure, whatever heart pays us that valuable tribute.

C H A P. XXXVII.

I Directed my chair to Lady Palestine's, from whom I hoped to learn the whole of the affair between Lady Trente and Lord Dorchester, which, from his behaviour, I more than ever believed; but pride would not suffer me to ask any questions of his servants, tho' in such particulars they are generally well qualified to give information.

At Lady Palestine's, I was told she was not at home. I knew she never went abroad at that hour; and being well acquainted with the fashionable paradox of a lady's being abroad when she is at home, I replied, that I was sure she was denied, and therefore desired the servant would return and tell her my name. He complied; but brought me back word, that "my name could be no recommendation to me while my conduct was so indiscreet."

Rejected a second time, I had not courage to go to any other of my acquaintance, especially as her Ladyship was

was the only one with whom I was on an intimate footing; but ordered to be carried to my own house, where I hoped to be screen'd from such indignities, and perhaps to get some light into this undeserved ill treatment; for such, I thought, I had a right to call these affronts, since indifference could not excuse brutality; nor did I suppose that my forced absence could be attributed to my dishonour. I was insensible to the suspicious air it bore, and thought it should have excited pity, not resentment, in the hearts of those that loved me. I imagined they might be apprehensive for my safety, and pity my fate, but not blame my conduct. Since I became better acquainted with the world, I have been sensible that they could not be called unjust in the opinion they had conceived of me, tho' they proved in an error; when people can judge only by appearances, a mistake may often be unfortunate without being blameable.

But as at that time, my ignorance prevented my looking on the treatment I received in this light, I was not free from

from resentment; especially against Lady Palestine; she had hurt my pride; my Lord had wounded me in my affections; and grief did not leave me spirit enough to be angry with him. It was not in the power of any other person to afflict me, for *where the greater malady is fix'd, the lesser is scarce felt.* My mind was so little capable of any increase of uneasiness, that it received no addition from finding myself excluded, even from my own house. The chairmen knocked a considerable time at the door, till they were convinced nobody was at home, and asked me where I chose to be carried.

This question indeed puzzled me, tho' it could not add to my distress. I was afraid of attempting to get admittance into any other place, lest it should be refused me, and being little able to think, was long sat down there, before I could recollect a house where I might hope to be received. At last I thought of a millener whom I had used, and directed them there.

This woman very readily accommodated me with a room, and would have favoured me with her company, had I
not

not entreated her to leave me to myself; for in such a state of mind the sight of any person was irksome; it must have laid me under some restraint; for my pride would not suffer me to declare that I could be so much affected by one who felt nothing for me but indifference; and I was afraid of mentioning Lady Palestine's behaviour, since her scorn might prove an example to the millener; for the little love to ape the great. It was not till the next day that I became able to resolve or execute any thing. I then determined to write to Lord Dorchester; justifying this course from all imputation of meanness, by persuading myself, that to shew I was blameless was a duty I owed to my reputation. Inconstancy appeared to me the more criminal, from my having no idea of it. I supposed it a crime almost unparelled; and knew not that custom was thought so great an alleviation of the offence, that it was treated by the world as one of the smallest frailties to which human nature is subject. Your Ladyship will, therefore, not wonder if some resentment was mixed with grief. But
I found

I found it easier to humble my pride than to mortify thy affection.

Had I perceived that appearances were against me, I should have thought myself obliged to make all the submissions which could have been required of me, if I had been really in the wrong, for who can be secured in such cases from mistaking the truth? But without this excuse for my condescension, I wrote to my Lord a short account of my imprisonment, adding, that, “ I hoped he
“ would not partake of the Marchioness’s aversion to me; and he might
“ be assured that I should not return
“ even an unfriendly wish for the injuries I had received from her; for
“ whoever was his wife I must look on
“ with respect; and, if she pleased, with
“ affection; and, indeed, if she made
“ him happy, must feel that gratitude
“ towards her which a person deserves
“ who confers upon us the greatest blessings in life; for in that rank I
“ should always esteem his happiness,
“ however his heart was estranged from
“ me.” I then begged, “ if he no longer
“ wished to see me, he would in-
“ struct

“ direct me where to find my former so-
“ litude, and not detain me in a place
“ which was become much more lonely
“ to me than my cottage.”

I forbore, as much as I was able, any strong expressions of my grief. If his affection was gone, I did not wish to move his pity; and my concern was too tender to suffer me to make him any reproaches.

As soon as I had written my letter I sent it by one of the chairmen who had brought me to the milliner's. This man, either moved with compassion for one he saw so deeply afflicted, at an age when grief might reasonably have been thought far off, or actuated by the less laudable motive of hoping to find advantage from attending on a person whose affairs appeared so confused and complicated that a menial assistant might be requisite, came early in the morning to ask if I had any commands. Whatever was his motive, the effect was convenient; I wanted a messenger, and gladly employed him. His sagacity convinced him that my letter was of importance to me, and, without my say-
ing

ing any thing to that purpose, assured me he would return with the utmost expedition.

I believe the chairman kept his word ; but to impatient expectation, time seems to move with leaden pace. The hour-glass empties slowly to those who watch every sand that falls thro' it. This was the case with me ; the fleetest of the creation, had he been my messenger, would have appeared slow to my impatience. From the instant the chairman left, I expected his return, and would not believe my watch, it marked the progress of time so tediously, in comparison of my swift imagination. After what I thought a long absence, the man came back ; I had scarce courage to ask the success of my letter, and was damped by seeing none in his hand ; but calling all my fortitude to my aid, I stuttered out something like an enquiry ; to which he replied, Lord Dorchester was at home, and the servant carried in my letter, but returned immediately with it in his hand, saying, his Lord refused to receive it, and commanded him, “ never to bring any more
“ messages

“ messages or letters from me, unless
“ he wanted to incur his displeasure,
“ and entirely destroy all hopes of his
“ recovery of health or ease.” With
this answer the chairman was returning,
when the servant overtook him, desired
the letter, and that he would acquaint
him where I was to be found ; bidding
him “ present his duty to me, and as-
“ sure me that he would make farther
“ trials to bring me an answer ; and if
“ he could not succeed, I should receive
“ my own letter safe, with an account
“ how he had proceeded.”

Nothing could be more shocking to
me than to find my Lord would not even
read my justification. Indifference alone
could make him void of all curiosity
about me ; therefore I had little hope
from his servant’s good-natur’d inten-
tion ; I knew if the sight of his hand
had not dispelled any pique I had con-
ceived against him, the strongest argu-
ments from another must have been un-
availing ; I should have discovered more
eloquence in the least significant letter
of the alphabet written by him, than in
all the words another tongue could have
uttered.

uttered. Had I entertained the least hope of succeeding by his servant's intercession, my pride was too much humbled to have felt any mortification at being reduced to make use of such an intercessor; but I confess I blushed to think how low I was fallen. I now strongly experienced this infallible truth,

She must be humble who would please;
And she must suffer who would love.

And yet I continued blind to my own passion; I suspected myself of no tenderer affection than friendship, of which I had so high an idea that I readily reconciled every pang I endured to my exalted notion of it. If I compared the sentiments of my heart with what was generally called friendship in the world, it only served to make me despise what others professed, not to suspect my own. A common effect of a comparison between ourselves and others; any difference that appears to our own opinion, generally turns to our advantage, and gives us opportunity of bestowing some self-applause upon our own perfections.

C H A P.

C H A P. XXXVIII.

I HAD been for some hours devoted to despair, when I beheld Lord Dorchester before me. I was so buried in thought, that I had not heard the door open, but the sight of him put all my reverie to flight. He eagerly embraced me; and thanked Heaven he once more had me in his arms. Sudden joy overcame me, and deprived me of the power of speech. During my silence, he “ begged pardon for his
“ insolence in refusing to see me, but
“ that convinced I had voluntarily fled
“ from him, he thought it mean as
“ well as imprudent, to trust himself
“ with the sight of one from whom
“ he was endeavouring to wean his affections; a painful trial which had
“ cost him many pangs, and yet proved
“ totally unsuccessful. The same motive,” he said, “ induced him to refuse my letter; which, he confessed,
“ he repented the next minute, and
“ should have called back my messenger
“ ger

“ger. had he not been restrained by
“the fear of exposing himself to his
“servants, and being despised for his
“meannefs. This confideration pre-
“vented his asking any more questions
“concerning me the day before; but
“he could no longer maintain the same
“command over himself, and on some
“other pretence, calling the servant
“who had brought him my letter,
“he enquired what messenger I had
“employed.”

This gave the good-natured footman an opportunity of describing the condition into which I was thrown by his refusing to see me, and all that passed on the occasion. Seeing his Lord moved by the account he gave him, he ventured to express his wonder at his Lordship's having rejected my letter, for, “he was sure I could not be
“in the wrong, since it was plain to
“perceive that I did not expect such
“treatment as I had received the day
“before; and had none of that confusion in my countenance so impossible to be hid by one who fears the
“reproaches of a person she has injured.”

“ jured.” Lord Dorchester, without seeming offended at the liberty he took, replied, that “ if he had supposed Miss Lenox could have justified herself, he would, at least, have read her letter; and, indeed, could not but accuse himself of great insolence in having refused to see her, when she had favoured him with a visit, or to receive what she had done him the honour to write; but that anger had got the better of the respect due to her.”

The servant not perceiving that pride might be his Lord's strongest motive for retaining some appearances of regard for one whom he had taught every person belonging to him to respect, was encouraged by the manner in which he spoke of me, and told him “ the chairman had left my letter, therefore the means of repairing what he thought an offence was still in his power.” Observing that he looked rather disconcerted than angry; he brought it, and laying it on the table before him, went out of the room, while my Lord continued

tinued in an anxious uncertainty what course to take. He owned, that “ had
“ his servant staid, he could not have
“ prevailed on himself immediately to
“ have opened the letter; so strong
“ was pride and resentment; but when
“ he found himself alone, every other
“ consideration vanished before his hope,
“ weak as it was, of seeing me justified
“ by my own defence.” But, continued he, “ when I had read your letter, the affliction expressed in it, un-
“ tinctured either with resentment for
“ the inconstancy of which you suspected me, or the meanness of one
“ who cannot feel an injury; and the
“ cruel treatment you had received on
“ my account, as I gathered from the
“ circumstances you related, gave me
“ the tenderest concern, at the same
“ time that it relieved me from a state
“ of misery, to inspire me with the
“ most lively joy. I could not restrain
“ my impatience, but instantly repaired
“ to your house, with such haste and
“ eagerness in my steps and countenance, as attracted the attention of
“ every

“ every one that met me. I per-
“ ceived it plainly, but could not com-
“ mand either, nor on such an occa-
“ sion bestow a thought on the opi-
“ nion of the multitude. But when
“ I hoped to receive the reward of my
“ haste by the sight of you, I learnt
“ that you was not there, nor could
“ your servants give me any further
“ information, than that a neighbour
“ told them a chair had stopped a con-
“ siderable time at your door the day
“ before, and finding no one at home,
“ at last went away. I reproved them
“ for their negligence in leaving the
“ house empty, with more warmth and
“ bitterness than I believe any of my
“ dependants ever saw me use; and
“ now had no chance of finding you
“ but in the possibility of my people’s
“ having learnt where you were. In
“ order to make this enquiry, I re-
“ turned home with as much speed as
“ I had left it, and had the satisfaction
“ of hearing where you lodged. Add
“ to this, my joy in finding you, my
“ dearest Ophelia, the delight of know-
“ ing you think me worthy of pardon.
“ Relate

“ Relate to me every circumstance of
“ what has befallen you. Compleat
“ my felicity by giving me hopes you
“ still retain an affection for me, or
“ if you do not, forbear to tell it me :
“ deceive me into happiness, and hy-
“ pocrify will for once be a virtue.”
Alas! I replied, “ I never had less
“ occasion to act the hypocrite, if this
“ is all you require. Though I have
“ thought your treatment of me cruel,
“ I could not resent it. My heart
“ was too much your’s to be angry ;
“ it could only grieve. But surely,
“ it was a melancholy recompence for
“ all the pain I had suffered by my
“ absence from you.”

Lord Dorchester used all his power
to soothe me ; and in justification of
what he had done, informed me, that
Lady Trente wrote him a letter the
day after my being carried off, to in-
form him, that “ she had overheard
“ Miss Lenox concerting with a young
“ gentleman, the night before, the
“ means of running away with him ;
“ and considering all the precau-
“ tions necessary towards concealing
“ him

“ him from his Lordship’s resentment,
“ and her from his search. That she
“ did not hear of the day that was
“ agreed upon, therefore thought she
“ could not too soon give this informa-
“ tion, as there seldom passed much
“ time between the forming such
“ schemes and the execution of them;
“ and knowing none of my friends,
“ but his Lordship, she believed her-
“ self obliged in mere charity to ac-
“ quaint him with it, as it might give
“ him the power of preventing the
“ young Lady’s ruin.”

This ingenious epistle found Lord
Dorchester in the utmost anxiety; and
the agreement it bore to my disap-
pearing, persuaded him of the truth
of it. A prophetess who could fulfil
her own predictions, would be very in-
judicious if the fact did not corre-
spond with her words. He went di-
rectly to her house to enquire more
particularly into the affair, which she
confirmed to him by many corroborat-
ing circumstances of her own inven-
tion; and expressed herself “ vastly
“ concerned, that she did not appre-
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“ hend how soon it was to be executed,
“ since it might possibly have been pre-
“ vented, if she had acquainted him
“ with it at the instant she overheard
“ us.” Lord Dorchester wanted to discover the gentleman; but she would give no particular description, telling him, “ she could not satisfy a curiosity
“ which might endanger a life she so
“ highly valued; as she feared he intended to call the person to account.” Whenever he pressed for this information, he could obtain nothing but expressions of her attachment to him (of which, though not a vain man, he was not ignorant before) and invectives against my ill conduct; telling him
“ it should make him indifferent to
“ my fate, for no more could be required of a guardian than a parent
“ would perform, who on such provocation must abandon their best-beloved
“ child, and leave her to receive the punishment she so justly deserved.”

Lady Trente procured many interviews with Lord Dorchester, by pretended informations that might assist him in finding me out, the only means she could

could discover of bringing him to her house; and therefore her working brain was continually employed in inventing them; and every time she saw him she omitted no endeavours to attract him, but mixed so many bitter accusations against me, with the language her love dictated, that she only increased his dislike to her. He thought the love could not be delicate or generous, that took a pleasure in giving pain to the object of it, whatever benefit she might hope would thereby accrue to herself.

Having sufficiently informed each other of all that had passed during our separation, we spent the rest of the evening in rejoicing at its being, at last, ended; but my Lord declared he should never more think me safe out of his sight, nor knew how he should venture to leave me for an instant. There appeared an increase of tenderness in him, which silenced all my repinings at what I had suffered. Some disasters give a relish to good fortune, and little reverses quicken affection.

C H A P.- XXXIX.

I DID not return to my own house till the next morning; the hurry of my spirits had a good deal disordered me; and as all places are agreeable to the happy, I chose to remain that day at my lodgings; one great reason, I believe, might be an unwillingness to lose any of my Lord's company, by the interruption we should have received from removing my habitation.

My Lord Dorchester grew extremely uneasy when he perceived that my ill state of health was more lasting than my anxiety. We had both flattered ourselves that happiness would have cured me; but I believe my constitution had suffered as much from the unwholesome situation of the Marchioness's castle, as from vexation, and therefore ease of mind was not sufficient to recover me. He made me consult a physician, who declared Tunbridge waters the most probable remedy; but as it
was

was yet too early in the year to drink them, he gave me some medicines for present relief, with but indifferent success.

My Lord determined to carry me to Tunbridge, as soon as the season would permit, and engaged Lady Palestine to be of the party, which I then looked upon as an obliging attention; without any one to countenance and direct me, I must have been extremely at a loss, in a place so new to me; but I have since perceived, his motive was to prevent my becoming intimate with any person, who, not being so well instructed, might have frustrated his views.

In the interim, my Lord's principal care was finding me out a variety of amusements. I was carried to every place where there was any novelty that might divert me; but none made so great an impression on me, as a collection of curiosities, and Bedlam, both of which I was shewn. I proposed great pleasure from the first, imagining I should there see every thing that was uncommonly beautiful; and was greatly

F 3

disappointed

disappointed to find, that on the contrary, the collector seemed to have been actuated by a pique at nature. For if she happened to swerve from her general laws, to contradict all order, beauty and use; the mishapen, unform'd mass became to him more valuable than her fairest productions. He had spent his life in search of things, from which most people would have run away, and had cherish'd what would have frightened others. I found he was the general parent of monsters, the grand nurse of abortions, and equally the careful receiver of those who were born dead, or died of old age, declaring war with the earth, by defrauding it of its due tribute, the bodies of the deceased. The latter, indeed, I was informed had not been performed by his own art, he having robbed Egypt of half its Ptolomies, and yet without a moral view in shewing how poor a load is the body of a king. One might say with Anthony,

Lie there thou shadow of an emperor;
The ground thou coverest on thy mother earth,

Is all thy empire now. —————

I was

I was carried next to Bedlam, where I was surprized to find so few persons confined in a place, which I was told had been appropriated to the reception of such as were deprived of their reason, for I myself had seen a sufficient number to have filled it, whom I should have judged well qualified.

It was strange to me, that no person should be thought to deserve confinement, but he whose hurtful actions proceeded from mistaken notions. While he, who is prompted by evil intentions, who acts in open defiance of religion, virtue, and reason, and endeavours to form a happiness for himself in destroying that of society, shall be imitated by a few, approved by many, and tolerated by all. He shall be suffered to enjoy liberty, who from a false pride reduces himself and family to beggary and shame; he, who prostitutes his principles, and tramples honesty under foot, in order to gain honours, shall be received into society, while the poor wretch who innocently fancies himself a king, shall be shut in a dark room. Denied the light of the sun,

which graciously *shines on the just and the unjust.*

I received great consolation from seeing so much happiness among a set, who, above all others, seemed to claim our pity; and was glad to find, that the lunatics in Bedlam, as well as those that live more at large, could say that *there is a pleasure in being mad, which none but madmen know.* And I am not sure the former have not the larger share of it. He who madly believes felicity to consist in things which, when attained, would give him more pain than satisfaction, he who aims at impossibilities, and searches for what cannot be discovered, has just reason enough to feel disappointment, but not to conquer the turn of mind which led him into the vain pursuit which occasioned it.

On the contrary, in Bedlam, the ambitious man is a king, and with fancied majesty, struts as proudly in his wretched rags, as if cloathed in coronation robes, and his head is as easy as if graced with a diadem. The miser, in his dirty cell, believes himself

self possessed of mines of gold, and rejoices in his store. The gay man enjoys imaginary pleasure, and fancies variety, while his life passes in a dull sameness, day after day. The politician here beholds the success of every scheme; he new moulds the state, wages bloody wars, effects the greatest revolutions, and becomes the ruler of the world, without stirring out of his little cell. Here the author's imagination reconciles the two things he before found most irreconcilable, wit and riches, and enraptured, enjoys a consciousness of superior genius. The vain woman, in spite of age or small pox, perceives an admirer in every one that beholds her; and the finical beau fancies finery in his filth. Where every thing is imaginary, the pride and vanity of the undertaker assures him of success; nothing but reason will convince an obstinate man that his genius can be conquered, and his well-laid scheme baffled.

I was not long permitted to enjoy the consolation I received from finding that misery was not always the

F 5

portion

portion of the mad ; for we were soon carried to another part of the hospital, set aside for those who were afflicted with imaginary wretchedness. This, indeed, was a dreadful sight ; for tho' the causes were fantastick, the sufferings were real. There was something too shocking in this scene to tempt me to make a stay of many minutes in it. We left it as soon as we could ; but yet I thought the lesson it gave might not be useless to a mind capable of reflection. Should it not teach mankind to endeavour to bring their passions under the directions of reason ? to fix their inconstant minds, and expel every fantastick whim, lest they should gain strength from time and encouragement, till they arrive at the dreadful excess of which Bedlam affords so many examples ? If people once suffer themselves to deviate from reason's path, who can pretend to fix any certain bounds for their misguided steps ; and when the consistency of action which she should constitute, gives place to every whim of a capricious mind, it is not wonderful that they should

should wander on till they arrive at distraction. The pleasures, honours, and misfortunes of those who are denominated rational beings, are generally imaginary; they frequently rejoice at what is no benefit, and grieve for what is no evil; they eagerly pursue trifles which are not worth a thought, and neglect matters of the highest importance: in short, they will labour years to obtain pleasures which last but a day, and, for a moment's gratification, will give up the happiness which shall continue through all eternity.

I cannot help thinking your Ladyship lulled into a sweet slumber, by my moralizing on this scene; but indeed you must excuse me, for it made so deep an impression on my mind, that I can never recollect it without falling back into the same train of reflections which I then made upon it, and for which a longer experience of the world has only served to give me a greater scope. In consideration of this indulgence, I will promise, if possible, to avoid all such offence for the future, and the better to
effect

effect it, will carry your Ladyship to a new place, passing over in silence the remainder of the time I spent in London; for as it afforded little beside matter for reflection on customs to which I was a stranger, I may be apt again to turn moralizer. I must depend on the actions of others for making my narration more agreeable to you, than a long series of my own thoughts, which are nothing but a composition of witty observations, that would make any good-natured person weep the poverty of the imagination that gave rise to them; lively remarks, that would prove better soporifics than all the opium in Turkey; dissertations moral, religious, and entertaining; from which, after much yawning, you may learn, that it is right to do right, and wrong to do wrong; that friendship is better than enmity, and that it is wiser to please than to offend. These great truths I shall leave to be taught by persons who love sporting on an old sentiment in thread-bare words; avoiding, as much as I can, the produce of my own brain, in hopes of affording
you

you more entertainment by collecting exoticks, than from any plants that arise from so bad a soil as my imagination, which is not very fertile of any thing but weeds.

I must not, however, omit one affair which was transacted before we left London. The Marchioness of Trente was so enraged at Mrs. Herner's having left me a possibility of escaping, by which her schemes were frustrated, and she exposed, that she refused to see her at her return to London, where Mrs. Herner went, as soon as she found I was irrecoverably lost. A more lamentable effect of the Marchioness's displeasure than the withdrawing the light of her countenance, was her refusing to maintain her any longer; in which denial she abused her in the most opprobrious terms that rage and insolence could suggest. In this distress, Mrs. Herner applied to many of her friends, but found that few people's compassion extended farther than words and condolences, as for more effectual consolation every one shifted her off to another, as more able to assist her; like Gay's
hare,

hare, received nothing but advice to apply to others; *the sheep's at band, and wool is warm.* I suppose she thought I might harbour some resentment against her, in consideration of the part she had been employed to act towards me; at least, saw no reason to expect I should do for her what those who called themselves her friends refused; so that I only heard by chance that she and her niece had quarrelled, but the occasion of it was unknown. Lord Dorchester had advised me to conceal the Marchioness's behaviour towards me, and Mrs. Herner had not declared it, fearing to exasperate her still more.

Though I was as little disposed to esteem Mrs. Herner's disposition, as to be grateful for the office she had undertaken, yet I could not be insensible to her distress. "A brave man struggling with the storms of fate," is the noblest work of God, and deserves our admiration; but a mean man is still his workmanship, and, when afflicted, demands our pity. I told my Lord how much her misfortune affected me, and the more as I was, though not blameably, the

the occasion of them. I found his heart was not less penetrable than mine; he compassionated her, and said, "he could not bear that any one should be made wretched by an event which restored his happiness. He answered me, that I might be easy on her account, for he would take care she should have the means of being so; but thought it right that, if possible, they should be procured from Lady Trente, who, at least, deserved that punishment."

Lord Dorchester accordingly went to the Marchioness, and told her, that she must know he was well acquainted with her treatment of me, and that she might expect to have it made publick, and to become the topick of general discourse, if she would not agree to settle an independency on Mrs. Herner. Not that he was at all obliged to that Lady's intentions, who had been a vigilant gaoler, but because he pitied the woman." Lady Trente was shocked at seeing my Lord; but this proposal soon turned the blush of shame into the higher red of anger. He found her invincible

cible spirit scarcely to be subdued by the pride of reputation. She would indeed, after a short resistance, have consented to receive her aunt; but my Lord had undertaken the poor woman's cause, and thought he should but half relieve her distress if he exposed her to her niece's ill usage. He therefore insisted on a settlement of 200*l.* per annum for her, finding no hopes of such an allowance voluntarily, as he thought her relation to the Marchioness, and her past merits, deserved from her. At last he succeeded; got the settlement drawn up, and delivered it into the hands of the overjoyed Mrs. Herner.

C H A P.

C H A P. XL.

LADY Palestine delayed our going to Tunbridge, for more than a fortnight after Lord Dorchester wished me there. He was desirous of my drinking the waters as soon as the weather would permit; but her Ladyship did not apprehend she should receive sufficient pleasure from watching my recovery, to reconcile her to the place while it continued empty. She did not give this as her reason for deferring her journey, but put it upon business, which, in a woman who had no business but pleasure, told it as plainly, though more civilly, than if she had said it in express terms. By this delay, the place was pretty full when we got thither. We arrived late at night; but the love of company determined Lady Palestine to appear the next morning, and she insisted on my doing the same. I had been accustomed to evening crowds; but to be introduced into one so early in the day, was quite new to

to me, and so little agreeable to me at a time when my health made me rather languid in a morning, that I wondered it should ever be a practice among a society of invalids.

The music which played while the company remained upon the walks pleased me; but I have laughed at myself since, for the reasons I assigned for it. I imagined it was intended as a part of that course which was to restore the sick to health; and medically designed to promote cheerfulness, to remove the gloominess acquired in the night, enliven the languor of a sick person's morning, to divert their thoughts from their infirmities, and give a turn to their spirits. Not contented with this reason alone, as some of the music seemed too loud for the trembling frame of an invalid, I suspected it was also intended to drown the complaints of the sick; as drums and trumpets are used in battle, to prevent the groans of all the wounded from being heard by the rest, who might be intimidated by them. Imagination often makes us attribute to
design

design what is really the effect of chance,

And learned commentators view,
In Homer, more than Homer knew.

But I am still of opinion, that though this may not be a reason for the music's playing, it is a good consequence arising from it; for I observed, that if it ceased for a moment, I heard a hundred voices, too weak indeed to contend with the shrill violin, or the hoarse violincello, uttering promiscuously the words jaundice, palsy, gout, rheumatism, with the names of almost every other disease incident to human nature; with so minute a detail of the symptoms of each, as increased the evil in the sufferer's imagination, and lowered the spirits of the hearer; and all in such a confusion of tongues, that it was impossible to appropriate to each their respective complaints, but served to convince me, that all distempers were there assembled. This filled my mind with a kind of horror; and I was almost

most ready to believe I made one in Holbein's dance of death.

I was for some time amused with the variety of characters this place afforded, and with the vanity and envy so apparent in many, which I make no doubt often delays the benefit that would otherwise be received from the waters. A pretty woman, afflicted with the jaundice, whose spirits have been sufficiently depressed with the cloud of yellow spread over her charms, has been seen to grow visibly of a deeper dye by the persecution of a rival beauty, who, to complete the triumph of health and bloom, would always sit next her. It was common to see a young lady with bright eyes, and resplendent complexion, place herself close by a pale and languid spectre, and with pleasure considering the contrast; or a giggling girl, crowding a dejected invalid, who might have sat for the image of patience on a monument.

The variety of behaviour in this various company, was not less entertaining. I was often diverted with observing a meeting between a delicate town

town lady, and a robust Northern lass; the contempt in each of their countenances, sufficiently proved the self-satisfaction of both. The easy assurance of a person much accustomed to company, and the timorous shyness of a country girl, who never before was five miles distant from the family mansion, makes no bad scene; the one advancing with intended affability, while the other, with innocent fear, retires from the forward thing, whom she suspects of some bad design.

When I had so often observed these movements of the mind, that they grew old to me, they ceased to entertain, and I became very much tired of the rooms, except on ball-nights. I loved dancing; and Lord Dorchester, or Lord Larborough (who followed us down to Tunbridge) were my partners. I found more than ever the inconvenience of being the subject of observation; I could neither sit nor walk in peace. Every motion was constrained, by perceiving myself continually stared at. In a morning, indeed, I was less observed; sick people have not
then

then spirits enough to be impertinent : my Lord said I owed it to the paleness of my complexion, for sickness had robbed me of my natural colour ; though the heat of the room in an evening, would in a degree restore it. Lady Palestine used to be out of patience with the uneasiness she saw me under at being looked at ; and would tell me she never envied me so much ; I have been ready to reply, that “ perhaps she thought “ a very exact examination could dis- “ cover only beauties in her, whereas “ I was fearful that such strict observa- “ tion must rather enable them to per- “ ceive defects in me, which, in a tran- “ sient view, might be overlooked.”

I wished myself less at leisure to remark the actions of others, the impertinent effect of idleness ; and growing extremely tired of sitting by a card table without having the least knowledge of the game there played at (which however so fixed Lord Dorchester's and Lady Palestine's thoughts on their cards, that I had no conversation with them) I was tempted to try my fortune at
a game

a game at chance, then much in fashion. As no skill was required I thought I might succeed as well as others; fortune has been said to favour fools, and at play I was an absolute idiot, therefore had some reason to hope he would prove propitious.

I went home, the first night, winner of two or three guineas, and was very well entertained. Play, by keeping up an eager attention, amused me much, and soon awakened in me the spirit of a gamester. I regularly attended the table every night, but constantly with bad success. This did not discourage me; but on the contrary, convinced my luck was changed, I continued till I had not a shilling left; fully expecting that every stake would bring me back a part of what I had lost. I was now in a disagreeable situation; I reproached myself for my folly, and not being able to supply the expences of going abroad, was obliged to spend my evenings at home. This was not very easy; for Lady Palestine loved no place that was not crowded,
and

and my Lord was engaged in a party, which he knew not how to leave; I was obliged therefore, to practice a constant resistance to the pressing instances they continually made me to accompany them. It was with regret I did what seemed so very obstinate and disobliging as to persist in saying I did not chuse to go, when they so earnestly intreated it; but I was too much ashamed of my folly to own my reason; besides, that it would have been making my Lord pay for it instead of myself. To be so long deprived of his presence, was very painful to me; if I had gone to the rooms, there were times when he was not fixed to a card table, and I then used to enjoy his conversation; but now I did not see him for three long hours together. He too regretted the same; and, at last, began to account for my obstinacy from his own imagination.

One day he was extremely melancholy, though he seemed as fond of me as ever, if not more tender; but it was accompanied by such an air of dejection, that
I forgot

I forgot the emptiness of my purse, and thought of nothing but him.

Having a dread of his jealous temper, I considered whether this change could be attributed to it. I recalled to mind every circumstance of my behaviour; whereby I dissipated all fears of that sort. I had been so very cautious of giving him offence, that I had avoided the acquaintance of all men, and had not even given a civil answer to those who spoke to me, or thanked them for such civilities as people have an opportunity of paying at a publick place. To do this had been a great force on my disposition, which is naturally free and gay; but I had suffered too much not to conquer it.

Unable to guess at the reason of the depression of my Lord's spirits, I begged him to tell it me, and with some reluctance he said, " It is cruel, " my dear Ophelia, to persecute you " any more; I am sensible, if I am unhappy it is not with your intention; " your behaviour shews me, that you

Vol. II. G " are

“ are unwilling to make me so ; though
“ it afflicts, yet it obliges me ; and by
“ raising my esteem, increases my af-
“ fection, while it proves the abate-
“ ment of your’s. Do not imagine I
“ mean to reproach you ; you are not
“ unjust, though I am unhappy ; our
“ inclinations are not in our power ;
“ if your’s were, I am persuaded I
“ should retain the same portion I once
“ enjoyed. You look surprized ; but par-
“ don me, my dearest angel, if I impute
“ your resolution of not going abroad,
“ to a desire of conquering some im-
“ pressions made on your heart, which
“ in publick you fear would be in-
“ creased. I can assign no other rea-
“ son for your resisting our importu-
“ nities, and thus turning us loose in a
“ place of gaiety and dissipation ; nor
“ for the confusion and disturbance
“ which is visible in you, when we
“ endeavoured to get you with us, and
“ the thoughtfulness in which I often
“ perceive you. I admire the efforts
“ you use to conquer this new-born
“ inclination ; it is worthy the good-
“ ness

“ nefs of your heart, which would
“ make you grieve to render any one
“ fo unhappy as you know I fhall be
“ made by the lofs of your affections.
“ I have nothing to complain of but
“ my own defects, which prevent my
“ keeping a heart that fo generously
“ endeavours to remain mine. I al-
“ moft pity you for poffeffing vir-
“ tues, which increafe a love your
“ humanity would wifh to diminifh;
“ you are far above the low pride of
“ defiring to preferve an affection you
“ cannot return. My kind, my good
“ Ophelia, tell me, with your natural
“ fincerity, if I may hope, that by
“ thus avoiding my powerful rival, I
“ begin to recover the heart I was
“ in danger of lofing.” All this he
uttered with fo much melancholy and
tendernefs, that I could have fhed
tears for his imaginary misfortune.
My aftonifhment at this unaccountable
whim was beyond expreffion. I cried
out, “ What will not a jealous fancy
“ fuggelt! How fertile is its inven-
“ tion! Oh! my Lord, how ingenuous
G 2 “ are

“ are you to torment yourself ! Who
“ would imagine, that all your suppo-
“ sitions have no other foundation than
“ my staying a few days at home ! Con-
“ sider how susceptible you are of fan-
“ cies that afflict you ; had I been eager
“ to go abroad, I should have given rise
“ to some of these kind of suspicions ;
“ by chusing to stay at home, I have
“ done the same ; can nothing but a
“ total indifference to every thing,
“ give you the ease of mind I wish
“ you ? I have much of it in my
“ heart ; but youth and vivacity will
“ not suffer such coldness of manner.
“ I then assured him, that so far from
“ having found any one whom I was
“ disposed to like too well, I had not
“ even seen a man that was agreeable
“ to me.” But all I could say would
not convince him. He replied, “ this
“ was the answer of my humanity,
“ not of my truth ; that I thought
“ concealment justified by the ease
“ it might give him ; and, in short,
“ he would not believe that his fears
“ were groundless, if I would not
“ tell

“ tell him the reasons of my leaving
“ off going abroad, when he imagi-
“ ned it was grown more agreeable
“ by my having got into a party at a
“ game of which I seemed very fond.”
I then told him that the truth was, “ I
“ had been so foolish as to lose too
“ much money to like it any longer.”
“ That,” replied his Lordship, “ is
“ no reason why you should not go
“ abroad as you did before you played.”
Thus he perplexed me, by not readily
accepting my reasons; till at last, I was
reduced to tell him, “ that I thought
“ it would be more prudent to take the
“ honour of the delicate, wise, and
“ generous sentiments, upon which he
“ had supposed me to act, than to own
“ frankly, that I was so very great a
“ fool as to lose every shilling I had
“ at cards; and, by that means, had
“ been obliged to keep house for want
“ of money to defray the necessary ex-
“ pences of going abroad.”

I looked sufficiently silly, I believe,
when I made this confession; but when
I had thus mortified myself, it was hard

that my Lord would scarcely credit it. To give a particular description of my folly, was a sufficient punishment for it; but I found this necessary in order to convince his incredulity; so with some blushes I told him, “ that my
“ first ill luck made me desperate, and
“ I lost all my money in trying to re-
“ cover part of it.”

Lord Dorchester laughed so heartily that he put me almost out of humour, and quite out of countenance; but he soon acknowledged this to be so natural and so common, that it was extremely credible; and declared himself overjoyed to find that my money, and not my affections, had been won. He would have repaired my ill fortune, by giving me much more than I chose to accept.
“ He begged I would not controul
“ my inclinations, for he could furnish
“ me with a considerable sum yearly,
“ without any inconvenience to himself,
“ and could trust to my prudence for
“ not exceeding it.”

I could not forbear returning him thanks for an indulgence in reality
fo

so blameable, by telling him, that
“ he was willing to build his depen-
“ dance on a very weak foundation, as
“ my past folly too plainly shewed,”
I assured him, “ I was sufficiently dis-
“ gusted with play, and would never
“ again begin any thing to which my
“ prudence found it difficult to put a
“ stop.”

My Lord seemed so happy in having learnt the cause of my retirement, that I could not but think I was peculiarly fortunate in having the power of giving so much pleasure by the discovery of my follies. But this suspicious turn in his temper appeared to me very strange; I thought it an unaccountable narrowness of mind in a man so generous in other respects.

I wondered he should suppose friendship should be so soon conceived or ended, since either appeared to me a work of time. One might see merit in an early acquaintance, or in some unguarded moment, discover faults, which for a long time had been concealed; but the effect could not be so speedy;

G 4

natural

natural indifference, or habitual fondness require time to conquer them. However as this covetousness of my affection proved the value he set upon it, I was not inclined to complain of the consequences; but thought myself made for the destruction of his virtues, since only in his behaviour to me had he ever swerved from the most extensive generosity and tenderest humanity.

C H A P.

C H A P. XLI.

DURING my stay at Tunbridge, I saw many bad consequences attend gaming; but none are worth communicating, except one, which was so ludicrous, that as it soon became publick, it grew a general entertainment. A country gentleman, a few years before, had married a young lady, with whom he made an agreement, before marriage, that she should never go to London; to which, as liking the man and his fortune, she readily consented. After a pretty long stay in the country, she began to grow a little tired of her solitude, and could not forbear using some persuasions to prevail on her husband to be more complaisant after marriage than he was before. A strange endeavour certainly; but he being a good natured man, was sorry to refuse her earnest request; though as their estate was small, and they had a pretty large family, he could not reconcile it to his conscience. However,

G 5

as

as her desire grew very strong, and her importunities frequent, he at last told her, that “ an expedition to London
“ was too expensive to agree with
“ their finances, but if she could save
“ up an hundred pounds, as she had
“ the sole care of the money, he would
“ go with her to Tunbridge, and stay
“ there as long as it lasted.”

Thus encouraged in her œconomy, she abridged their own table, starved the servants, and was indefatigable in her endeavours to scrape up this happy sum.

This, in a year's time, she accomplished, and, with great joy, acquainted her husband with it. He had suffered a little by the change which this sparingness had produced in the entertainment of himself and his friends; but that had never mortified him so much, as the knowledge that the sum was completed. He was fond of the country, loved the sport it afforded, and had besides great part of his estate in his hands, for the good management of which his presence was absolutely necessary. However, he would not disappoint

appoint his wife, or break his word; so the day was fixed, and they went thither accordingly. They placed themselves in the first lodgings they could find; but as they were very bad, it was agreed they should change them for better the next week.

Now our lady was in high bliss; and that all her time might be filled up, was abroad from morning till night. The husband was not fond of any of the diversions going forward there; and found the weariness natural to people at first coming to a place where they have no acquaintance, and where the manner of life is quite different from what they have been accustomed to, or liked; but he did not despond, as he hoped to get into a little more society and hospitality when they had a better apartment.

Accordingly, at the end of the week, he desired his lady to give him the bill in which they had brought their money, that he might get it changed, and then they would go and take good lodgings, and settle themselves in a comfortable and handsome manner.

The

The meek wife was a little confounded, and deferred her compliance, saying, "it was time enough; their lodgings would serve very well another week, and then they should have better choice, as in so fluctuating a place many people would be gone by that time," with many other pretences to delay it. But the husband, shewing her reasons were not sufficient, persisted in his request.

This increased her confusion to the greatest degree; at last, with downcast looks, conscious blushes, and fluttering voice, she cries, "my dear, I have changed the bill." "Oh! very well," answered the husband, "it will save me the trouble of doing it; but give me a little money that I may provide us with such things as we want." The poor lady grew still more distressed, and was reduced to whisper, "I have no money." "I beg your pardon," answered he; "I understood you had changed the bill. Come, give it me then, and you shall have some presently. I assure you, Molly, there is no living at this place without

“ without money.” “ You are right,” answered the penitent wife, “ I have “ changed the bill.” “ Well, well,” replied the husband, “ I am very “ stupid to be sure, this thick air “ has affected my senses, and I can “ understand nothing: first, I fancied “ you said you had changed the bill; “ and then, that you had no money. “ I do nothing but blunder. Come, “ my dear, let’s go and seek for lodg- “ ings; our cousins of Penn-Hall came “ last night; my uncle Crump writes “ me word, he shall be here to-mor- “ row; and my aunt Jones is expected “ every minute. We must invite these “ friends to dinner. I would not have “ them think we are grown fine folks, “ because we are in a fine place; we “ must not forget our relations. I love “ to live well every where with my “ family.” “ My love,” says the abashed lady, again, “ indeed you do “ not blunder; I beg your pardon, “ but,” and instead of finishing her sen- tence, a few tears trickled down her cheeks. “ What is the matter with “ you, Molly?” quoth the husband, “ why

“ why, you are a riddle, I think.
“ Come, speak plain, and never cry.
“ Why you know I am never angry.
“ You are my good wife, and I love
“ you; say what you please, for I can-
“ not bear to see you vexed.”

“ You are too good, my dear,” replies the wife, sobbing grievously; “ but
“ it must come out, so I may as well
“ tell you at first, my love, that I
“ have lost.”—— Here the tears
flowed again. “ Oh, you have lost
“ your purse, have you?” answered
the husband; “ why I am sorry for you;
“ it is hard you should lose any part
“ of what you had saved with so much
“ care, and I wish I could afford to
“ make it up to you. But we will
“ have it cried. If an honest person
“ has found it, he will restore it un-
“ diminished; but to be sure, there are
“ more rogues than honest men here;
“ so the chance is against us; how-
“ ever, if we do not recover it, you
“ are so good a manager, that we shall
“ do very well some time on the rest,
“ we must live a little more sparingly,
“ that is all.”

Alas !

“ Alas ! Alas ! ” cried she, in an agony, “ there is no rest to live upon. “ We have nothing of which to be “ sparing.” “ What,” says he, “ had “ you all the money in your purse ? “ That was unlucky indeed, and I am “ afraid will make it more difficult to “ be recovered ; for there are people “ whose honesty would have resisted “ twenty pounds, who will not be proof “ against an hundred.”

“ It was not lost so neither, my dear “ husband,” replied the lady, “ I will “ confess the whole truth, if my tears “ will but let me, You must know “ then, the first night I went into the “ rooms, I saw a great many people “ at a pretty play ; it seemed the easiest “ game in the world. Some very ci- “ vil persons made room for me, and “ I could not see why I should not play “ as others ; so I sat down, and began “ by winning ; but before the end of “ the night I lost a good deal, and “ was obliged to get the man belong- “ ing to the table to change my bill. “ The next morning I endeavoured to “ win it back again, and did in part, “ At

“ At night I thought I might win the
“ whole; but instead of that, I lost
“ more. I was ashamed to let you
“ know it; but intended as soon as
“ I could get back all I had disbursed,
“ to play no longer, and to settle all
“ things with you.” Here her sorrow
“ grew very clamorous, and with much
difficulty she sobbed out, “ in trying to
“ win it, I lost it all to ten guineas.”

At this melancholy conclusion, the weeping dame was quite inconsolable; but the husband, not sorry to have a good excuse to return home, where his affairs required his presence, “ begged
“ her to make herself easy. That
“ he came only to divert her, and as
“ she had had her diversion, he was
“ perfectly well pleased, and as much
“ so that it was done in a short as a
“ long time. That he would pay for
“ their lodgings, and their journey
“ back; he had just heard a coach
“ cried that was going to their part
“ of the world; and he would secure it directly, for them to return
“ in, intreating her to be under no concern.” Thus he got her safe home,
to

to his great satisfaction; nor was the lady so mortified as one might imagine; being well out of a scrape she feared would have greatly offended her husband. She thought herself much obliged to him for an indulgence which he found very easy, as the event of their journey was as agreeable to him as it could be, in procuring him a speedy return.

Though in one folly I was kept in countenance, if companions in our weaknesses can have that effect; yet my ignorance and want of thought had consequences of such importance, that if I could have pleaded precedents for my errors it would have offered me no consolation.

The diversions of the place brought me into scrapes of which I had no notion before: that which most alarmed me, arose from a ball.

At the beginning of the evening, I was asked to dance by a gentleman with whom I had no acquaintance. Having been a good deal indisposed all day, I had determined not to dance, and saw nothing in this stranger, that
should

should conquer my resolution, with which I acquainted him, and he chose another partner. Toward the end of the night, being pretty well recovered, a lively tune inspired me with an inclination for dancing, and Lord Dorchester being by me, offered to be my partner, which was an additional inducement, and accordingly we began; but I had not gone down many couples, before I was stopped by the gentleman I refused, who addressed me with saying, "I had not used him like a gentleman, in dancing after I had told him I did not chuse it."

His countenance wore such visible marks of anger, that he startled me very much; but I answered very innocently, "that what I said was the real truth; when he asked me, I did not chuse to dance; but that I afterwards altered my mind."

To this he replied, that "the change he supposed was occasioned by being asked by a different person; had Lord Dorchester been in his place, the refusal would scarcely have been given."

I was

I was insensible to any affront being designed in this. I thought what he said extremely probable, though it was not then fact, and with great simplicity assured him, that " he was mistaken; " for that when he asked me I would " not have danced with any one; though " I allowed, to have had Lord Dorchester for a partner, might have been " a stronger temptation, as my intimacy " with him must make him more agreeable to me."

The angry man grew more ireful, and replied, " beauty could not excuse insolence;" adding, that " he " did not at all doubt but I was intimately acquainted with his Lordship; " who, in return for the intimacy, " should teach me how to treat gentlemen of fashion." He continued some time in this strain, repeating the word intimacy with a sneer, and so strong an emphasis, that I thought it had offended him, but did not imagine he meant more by it than I had done.

My Lord did not hear it with the same indifference. He came up to him, and told him, " it was not acting the part " of

“ of a gentleman to insult a Lady,
“ who, ignorant of the customs of
“ balls, having never been at one be-
“ fore she came to Tunbridge, could
“ not properly be said to offend against
“ a ceremony she knew not. He, in a
“ whisper, offered to defend my in-
“ tention, and justify his right to me
“ as a partner, when and where he
“ pleased; being as ready to do it as to
“ correct his impertinence and insolent
“ insinuations.” “ And,” continued

he, “ a man of courage would chuse
“ to attack one, rather than to affront
“ a young lady, from whom none but
“ yourself could resent any behaviour,
“ tho’ he might feel it most sensibly.”
Lady Palestine, who was within hear-
ing, cried out to me, “ what have you
“ done! You have occasioned a quar-
“ rel which may become fatal to the
“ life you value above all others.” Her
words filled me with terror and con-
fusion. I could not comprehend her
meaning fully; but was so extremely
affected, that Lord Dorchester begged
her to be silent, and desired I would
permit him to lead me home.

He

He could not have made a request with which I should more gladly have complied. I feared I knew not what for him, and consequently for myself; if he was with me, I thought us both safe; I wished to carry him from a place which, from what I could learn, I had made dangerous; and hoped to receive from him an explanation of what Lady Palestine had said to me. She followed us immediately; and made me understand the nature of the affront I had given, and the danger that resulted from it. The agonizing fears which now agitated my mind, rendered me incapable of receiving consolation from my Lord's assurances that the quarrel would pass over without further consequences. I could not be persuaded that they were not solely designed to ease my apprehensions, and therefore dared not venture to believe what the next day might prove too fatally untrue. I blamed him for his anger, telling him, that "if I had
" done a thing that was wrong, I
" deserved a little incivility in re-
" turn, and that he should not have re-
" sented

“ sented expressions which were not
“ too severe a punishment for an of-
“ fence against custom, though the er-
“ ror arose from ignorance, not design :
“ since people in the polite world pro-
“ fess being guided by fashion rather
“ than by reason, I could not stand
“ excused by what is not here a rule
“ of action, nor be justified by truth,
“ where, of all places, it is least allow-
“ able in a polite circle.” I was shock-
ed to find that decorum and polite-
ness required that I should have palli-
ated my refusal with his, and not have
owned a preference so very reasonable
and so little affronting, that the gen-
tleman might have flattered himself it
proceeded only from being acquainted
with Lord Dorchester, and entirely un-
acquainted with him ; a circumstance
which must greatly lessen the pleasure
of dancing with him, however agree-
able he might be to those by whom
he was better known. But as such
were the laws of custom, I thought
my error should have been acknow-
ledged, and the gentleman’s anger un-
resented.

Any

Any danger that threatened Lord Dorchester, appeared to me in its utmost terrors; but nothing could affect me so much as the apprehension of being the occasion of an action, which if not fatal to his life, must be so to his virtues, and consequently to his peace. Duelling, to one unprejudiced, must appear so criminal, so contrary to every branch of morality and religion, that I could not bear my Lord should have the most distant intention of committing it; that alone I thought a sufficient crime to sully the purity of his mind for ever. His not perpetrating his design could not make me easy; that he should have ever harboured the least thought of it, was an insurmountable affliction to me, who valued his integrity as much as his life, and was as tender of the one as of the other.

Lady Palestine laughed at my esteeming so criminal, an action which she
“ called spirited and honourable, and
“ almost requisite to the perfection of
“ a fine gentleman’s character, in which
“ courage was the most necessary ingredient

“ gredient.” Not considering that a defiance of the laws of God deserves a far worse name, and can never, to a well judging mind, wear the disguise of any virtue. Her sentiments raised an abhorrence in me, which my regard for her could not suppress; but I received some satisfaction from finding my Lord did not differ much from my opinion, but owned, that “ the properest object for true courage was the
“ resistance of a custom which contradicted the divine will; and that
“ duels proceeded from a degree of
“ cowardice which is always most moved
“ by present danger, and therefore had
“ stronger fears of the censure of mankind, which is a punishment immediately inflicted, than of the wrath
“ of God, whose effects may for some
“ years be suspended. He confessed,
“ that when he had ever been in danger of fighting a duel, he was always
“ sensible his motive was a want of
“ real valour, which he esteemed, but
“ knew not how to acquire.”

C H A P.

C H A P. XLII.

THOUGH the night put an end to a conversation in which we were not likely to agree perfectly, as our real sentiments differed, yet it could not afford me any rest. The opinion my Lord had expressed of duelling, in a great degree abated my fear of any such event; but yet as he confessed his own weakness, at the same time he acknowledged the crime, I could not think the safety of his person certain, and was sensible that his mind was not less contaminated, but rather more so, from the sense of the ill which he had thought of committing. I trembled for the man who could regard his fellow-creatures more than their great Creator; and suffer the most pernicious custom to banish religion, and even plain morality, from his breast.

Immersed in these reflections, the morning found me. My heart was too much oppressed to suffer me to think

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of

of rest, I had not even entertained a thought of going to bed; but after having sent away my maid, had yielded myself up to my meditations.

As soon as my Lord was up, which I learnt from a message he sent to enquire after my health, I went to him in his dressing room, rather to confine than to converse with him; for I could not think of letting him go out of the house, unless I could have accompanied him, which was by no means proper, for the agitation of my mind, and want of rest, had made such alterations in my countenance, that I was not fit to be seen. My Lord had an air of thoughtfulness, which increased my fears. Indeed my conversation was not fit to remove it; but even Lady Palestine's vivacity was ineffectual. He was serious, but not disturbed; his thoughts took a graver turn than common, but were not at all confused. This gave me some hope that the alteration which alarmed me, might arise only from the sense of the rashness he had been guilty of; I could not believe that a man while under the actual

actual intention of a crime, could possess any composure of mind. Confusion and terror I imagined to be the necessary consequence of criminal designs; and therefore received some consolation at perceiving none of those symptoms of guilt in him. Though I could not obtain a promise from him, that he would not fight with the man who had made me so wretched, yet he said every thing that he hoped might make me easy; but the want of that assurance weighed heavier in the scale of fear.

A visit from a gentleman with whom I knew him to be intimately acquainted, obliged me to withdraw; for my eyes were so swelled I was ashamed of being seen; but I intreated Lady Palestine to keep sight of my Lord; an office to which her own fears inclined her. When I retired to my chamber, I began, as was my custom when afflicted with vexation, to lament my having been taken from my retirement; but my thoughts soon took another turn, on reflecting how severely my Lord might suffer by having brought me from thence.

H 2

The

The punishment that threatened him extenuated his offence, and I only grieved that he was not born there with me; that he had not likewise been placed in a solitude where death was under God's immediate direction, and none could pass into another world till the Almighty had dismissed them from this, and opened for them the gates of eternity.

Above an hour had passed in these reflections, when I was raised by the entrance of Lady Palestine, who had such consternation in her countenance, as struck terror to my soul. My fear turned me to a statue; I could neither speak nor move; but she rendered all enquiries unnecessary, by telling me, that soon after I withdrew, Lord Dorchester desired her "to step out of the room, "for he had a little business to transact "with his visitor." As he had long employed this gentleman in some affairs, she was not surprized at the request, but complied with it. She long waited in expectation of being told they would be glad of her company, supposing the business that had required her

her absence could not last long; but finding her expectation not answered, she attended more carefully, and could not hear any one in the room; upon which she entered, and found it indeed empty.

She thought it so impossible that Lord Dorchester should have evaded her care, that she was going to seek for him in the house, when she observed, on a shelf against the door, a sealed packet, which she had not perceived before she withdrew, and, as she imagined, put there as the safest place; there being no bureau or drawer in the room. Pen, ink, and paper, on the table whereon we had breakfasted, shewed her they had been used. She found the packet was directed, by Lord Dorchester, for me.

Drawing very melancholy conclusions from these circumstances, she was greatly shocked. She brought me the packet, which I opened as soon as I was able, though I rather expected to learn more certain grounds for my fears, than any thing that could abate them. And, indeed, my grief received a very great

H 3

addition

addition from the contents, which were a will, as it said, made for greater security in confirmation of one he had left in London, whereby he bequeathed me his whole fortune.

This proof both of the danger that threatened his life, and of the strength of his affection, had so melancholy an effect upon me, that I fell into fits; from which Lady Palestine found it so difficult to recover me, that she left the fruitless trial to my servants, and gave her care where she hoped it might be of more real service.

She made all possible enquiry, in order to find which way Lord Dorchester had gone; but not being able to get any information, she knew not how to contrive means of having him pursued, which was her intention. From this perplexity, she was, at length, relieved by a gentleman, who, by a desire of avoiding company and taking a quiet walk, had chosen the least frequented places, and, in the most retired spot, found Lord Dorchester and his antagonist fighting. It was not without difficulty he parted them. My Lord had received no
hurt,

hurt, but his adversary was wounded in two or three places, but not mortally; my Lord's aim being to disarm him, without giving any considerable wound.

The gentleman, whose presence had been so fortunate, waited on Lord Dorchester home, who, on his arrival, found me in a condition that revenged me for the fright he had given me, by occasioning equal fears in him. The obstinacy of my disorder made him send for a physician, whose assistance he hoped might relieve me. Whether the art of this son of Æsculapius, or my natural strength might more properly claim the honour of my cure, I will not pretend to say, but one or the other wrought my recovery.

The first object I beheld was Lord Dorchester, who, standing at my bedside, was watching the symptoms of amendment. Joy and perception now seemed but one. To see him safe filled me with transports, which words could not have expressed, at a time when I had more at command; but at that happy instant I was speechless, not

H 4

being

being sufficiently recovered. However, silence did not conceal my joy ; I embraced my Lord with a tenderness that surprized him ; he has told me since, that, till then, he knew not half the impression he had made on my heart ; though he had long perceived I loved him with a stronger affection than I myself imagined.

The grave doctor's countenance expressed so much surprize, that it did not pass unobserved by me ; but attributing it to his having outlived the lively sense of joy, so natural at my time of life, I thought it no reason for me to confine the vivacity of sensations, as innocent as if they had been chilled by old age, and therefore did not conceal the transports of my heart. Since I became better acquainted with the world, I have been inclined to believe that I incurred the old gentleman's private censure ; but as secrecy is full as necessary in that profession, as knowledge in physic, he did not publish a behaviour which I supposed he thought indecent.

As soon as I was quite recovered, the doctor was dismissed, and resolutions
were

were taken for our leaving Tunbridge, whose waters had removed the complaints which brought me thither; and I had now no disorder remaining, but what was the consequence of my fright, and would be cured by ease of mind. I had, therefore, no occasion to stay longer. Lord Dorchester did not like to remain where he was continually exposed to hear his conduct canvassed; and your Ladyship will imagine it could not be agreeable to me to listen to an universal discussion of my inadvertency, since the consequences of it made it appear almost criminal.

Lord Dorchester left the place in two days; but Lady Palestine, on pretences to which I was obliged to submit, detained me there above a week after him; but I have since learnt that this was concerted between them, to avoid giving room for an increase of the reports which began to be spread, of a mutual attachment between my Lord and myself; which would have received great strength from our leaving Tunbridge together.

C H A P. XLIII.

AFTER Lord Dorchester left Tunbridge, the place grew very tiresome to me. I had nothing to do but to observe the various follies of the companies and to study vanity, which I perceived suffered alteration rather than diminution by time. The woman, who in her youth, placed her supreme joy in the flattery of the other sex, and in the number of partners she had at her command; when activity is no longer in the legs, and age has stiffened the joints and sunk the spirits; in short, when pertness has undergone its usual transformation into dulness, and an old age of cards succeeds a youth of folly, a plentiful supply of gentlemen of her party becomes the great object of her ambition; and the contention between her and her cotemporaries of the same taste will be as great as their envy while they were rival beauties. The appearance of a man of quality just arrived, awakes an

an equal impatience in both to add him to their party; while he, wavering between the importunities of each, keeps them in a suspense that increases their enmity. At the beginning of a season a private gentleman finds himself of consequence; but has the mortification of perceiving that he dwindles in their esteem on the arrival of a nobleman, who in his turn becomes neglected, if one of higher degree can be had to supply his place; for the vanity of these ladies is so voracious, that notwithstanding the party is full, they are so eager to raise the dignity of it, that after dropping the plebeians one by one as they gather patricians, the nobility, at last, become obliged to each other for their release; thus a Duke sets an Earl at liberty, the Earl a Viscount, the Viscount a Lord, as the Lord did a Baronet, and he before the untitled gentleman.

Nothing appeared to me more strange than the love of precedency. I have often been diverted to see how much pains a lady would take to walk first out of a room where lazeineis would have

have inclined her to remain; and last into another, where she was so little wished, and so little pleasure attracted her, that she could not have come too late. In this particular I gave great offence when I first went to Tunbridge, and while I took place of those who had a real title to it, I received only cool contempt for my want of breeding, and they would drop the acquaintance of the *vulgar thing*. But having gone before a young lady whose right of place was disputed, she pursued me with such swiftness, and asserted her prerogative so forcibly, that she threw me down a flight of a dozen steps, thereby impressing my want of good breeding strongly on my mind; and the sense of it being kept awake by my bruises, I afterwards became so cautious, that nothing but a desire to escape some impending danger could have induced me to have taken place even of a milliner. With no small entertainment have I observed a young lady, whose father had not been long ranked among the nobility, break off in a story she was
eagerly

eagerly telling, the subject being herself, and leave her honour and glory imperfectly celebrated, in order to get out of the door before the daughter of a new made Peer, whom she saw going towards it; while her mother, at a few yards distance, was prolonging her discourse with all possible impertinence, that she might leave the room at the same time with the newer Peerefs, and have the pleasure of asserting her prerogative.

But the last day of my stay at Tunbridge, I was taken off from this employ of the idle, the impertinently critical observations of others, which render them almost as destructive to society as those who are buried in mischief. Lord Larborough, who, by Lord Dorchester's departure, was become my partner in dancing, and my principal companion in conversation, gave me a more affecting and more interesting subject for my thoughts. He had long professed a great friendship for me, and for some time had added to the appearance of it by the most minute attentions, and those flattering distinctions which
insensibly

insensibly gain the esteem and regard of a young person. I conversed with him with all the freedom and confidence of friendship; not more pleased with him on his own account, than from knowing my Lord's affection for him.

From the time Lord Dorchester went away, Lord Larborough never mentioned him without a seeming perplexity; and when I would indulge myself in giving him the praises I thought his due, he would turn the discourse, and drop little hints, which at the time passed without my notice, though his unwillingness to dwell on the subject most pleasing to me, rendered his company less agreeable.

The day before we left the place, Lord Larborough appeared very uneasy. I could not forbear enquiring the reason of it, to which he replied, that "the thought of going away distressed him."

I asked, "what could attach him
" to that place, since he appeared to
" have no intimacy with any person
" there, and was not of so trifling a
" disposition as to take any great de-
" light

“ light in the pitiful amusements it
“ afforded, or to compare them with
“ the more solid pleasure arising from
“ the sincere friendship and conversa-
“ tion of a man whose mind was full
“ of variety, whose wit was inexhau-
“ stible, his judgment solid, and his
“ learning extensive; of which no one
“ could be so sensible as himself, since
“ he had an understanding capable of
“ perceiving and tasting his friend’s
“ excellence, and saw him, when con-
“ fident in his affection, remove all
“ restraint and disguise.”

Lord Dorchester’s name would have been an unnecessary addition. Lord Larborough could not doubt his being the man I meant, and accordingly answered, that “ he wished disguise was
“ less requisite to support the good cha-
“ racter of many people. Had that
“ never been banished, the conversation
“ of the man I so highly esteemed
“ would have been more delightful to
“ him, and he should not have been
“ obliged, when he admired the under-
“ standing, to have grieved that the
“ heart had shared so little of the per-
“ fection

“ fection too lavishly bestowed on the
“ other.”

I could not hear aspersions so contrary to my sentiments without resentment, and expressing myself warmly on his venting such injurious insinuations, he replied, “ he was every way unfortunate if he had incurred my displeasure by a slight expression of the indignation, nothing but affection for me had raised. Had the part of Lord Dorchester’s character he reflected on, concerned any other person, he should have beheld it with the same indifference he did the views of his other friends; but since his resentment had excited my anger, he should never more touch on the subject, which, indeed, he knew not how he came to do at all; he could curse his tongue for giving way to the sincerity of his heart; and hinting at secrets, which my Lord’s confidence in him had bound him by stronger ties to conceal, than his affections for me could offer for discovering them, he begged me to forget what he had said, and never let
“ one

“ one thought rest on his inexcusable
“ inadvertency.” Fortunately, though
I am not naturally very curious, this
made me so; “ I desired he would tell
“ me plainly what he meant,” but he
excused himself from complying. As
I pressed him still more earnestly, he
more absolutely denied me; till, at last,
I gave it up in despair. As if his re-
sistance was wearied out at the same
time with my importunities, but in
reality, as he did not design to keep
the secret, he was then reduced to de-
clare that “ he was not able to disobey
“ my commands; that I was absolute
“ mistress of him, and he wished he
“ could say of his fortune likewise,
“ which he would lay at my feet, if
“ it could in any way alleviate the
“ sense he feared I should have of the
“ treachery he was going to relate.”
By the force of this preparation, I be-
gan to tremble before he commenced
his narration; but every word increased
my horror. He began in the follow-
ing manner. “ I must previously ac-
“ quaint you, that it is very customary
“ for gentlemen to live with women
“ as

“ as if they were married, without
“ being so; which has this conveni-
“ ence, that they can leave them when-
“ ever they are tired, or see another
“ they like better. You have, by
“ great care, been kept ignorant of
“ this custom, lest it might frustrate
“ his Lordship’s intentions, by raising
“ your suspicions of them; for all his
“ hopes of success, depend on the
“ strength of your affection, joined
“ with unsuspecting innocence. To
“ shew what his desires are, he waits
“ impatiently to find some moment
“ when your virtue shall be off its
“ guard; this he may reasonably ex-
“ pect, while you are in no apprehen-
“ sion of an enemy.”

Here I could not suppress an exclamation suggested by my hatred in such principles, but cried out, “ what a bas-
“ sis for so vile, so treacherous an in-
“ tention! Can love and innocence
“ be turned into a means of ruin by
“ the person who ought most to pro-
“ tect them.”

“ Every thing,” he continued, “ has
“ hitherto been so well ordered, that
“ no

“ no one suspects you are not a wo-
“ man of real fortune, otherwise inno-
“ cence could not have preserved you
“ from infamy; for all people would,
“ on the knowledge of your being
“ thus maintained at his expence, judge
“ you guilty of the worst returns. A
“ fate you must expect, whenever
“ chance shall disclose the secret, which
“ sooner or later will happen.

It is impossible to express what I felt during this narration. All I had ever suffered, the fear of every evil, the persuasions of his inconstancy, were trifling pains to the thought of such baseness in a mind I had esteemed the seat of virtue. I could better endure an eternal separation from him, than thus to find him a stranger to goodness. My surprize and my detestation at all Lord Larborough had told me, was so great, that I could express it only by involuntary signs. I was struck dumb with so amazing a discovery. To this succeeded reflections on the probability of it. My love for Lord Dorchester seized on this only hope with eagerness, and I declared that the ac-
count

count I had listened to, was past belief; and he having concluded with offering his house and protection, and assuring me of the greatness of his affection, I added that, "I could easier imagine
" that the love he professed had the
" consequence I observed to be so com-
" mon in his country, jealousy, and
" a desire, arising from it, of getting
" me from him, who, till my last
" breath, must be cherished by me as
" my dearest friend, than give way for
" one hour to so injurious a suspicion
" of him, in whom I had experienced
" and observed the best qualities our
" imperfect nature admitted." Lord
Larborough was piqued at my reply: he told me, "if I chose to nourish the er-
" ror I was in, he had no more to say;
" but, perhaps, the prospect he had
" drawn, was not so shocking to me as
" he had imagined it would be; if I was
" desirous of searching into the truth
" of what he had said, he would con-
" vince me whenever I pleased."

This proposal startled me. It gave an air of truth to what he had related, which I could have wished not to have

have found in it; but in a doubt of such importance to me, I could not rest, therefore begged to have it cleared up as soon as possible. He then informed me, “ that there was an easy method
“ of discovering the whole the first
“ evening he should spend at my house
“ with Lord Dorchester, after I got to
“ London; I had nothing to do, but to
“ excuse myself soon after supper, on
“ pretence of the head-ach, and a de-
“ sire of going to bed, but instead of
“ doing so, to conceal myself where I
“ might hear all that should pass between
“ them.” I came into this, so anxious was I to know the truth of this dreadful account, though it appeared to me dishonourable for me to listen to what one is not intended to hear, yet surely, if ever excusable, it was so in my case. If Lord Dorchester was so very criminal as Lord Larborough represented, I could not expect an honest confession from him; and a denial of it, tho’ sincere, would not have entirely conquered my suspicions, or consequently have restored either my happiness or his; which depended, in some measure, in my confidence

dence and ease of mind. If in disowning such intentions, he denied the truth, my situation was too dangerous to remain safely in it. Besides, if a disinterested regard was so uncommon in this country, I perceived that though I should keep my innocence, I must lose the reputation of it, which, next to it, ought to be a woman's first care. To be obliged both to leave him and conquer my affection, was, indeed, a task too hard for my weak reason; but I flattered myself, that if this should prove true, my friendship would be turned into contempt. I loved him for the appearance of goodness and truth which he ever wore: If he proved different from what I believed him, the love founded on that belief ought to change; I hoped it would not outlive the object, as I could not reflect on the virtues I thought he possessed without recollecting they were profaned by being made a cloak to vice and injustice. I waited with impatience for the hour in which we should set forth on our journey, fearing, yet wishing, to learn what truth there was in Lord Larborough's accusation. I was not
without

without hopes of finding it a fiction; but yet when I recollected ever circumstance of Lord Dorchester's behaviour, my apprehensions were increased. If mankind were what Lord Larborough represented them, I had, indeed, great reason to suspect my Lord's views were such as had been described to me; but I was unwilling to let my thoughts dwell on so cruel a probability; and set out from Tunbridge with a mind so divided betwixt hope and fear, as is, I believe, more painful than the worst certainty, for anxiety is a more grievous state, as it is more turbulent than despair.

C H A P.

C H A P. XLIV.

AS we approached London, expectation of the event made me full of trouble; and with great reason, since it was to determine my future happiness or misery. Cruel uncertainty! the greatest misfortune certain and present could not exceed the torment of the anxious fears that then oppressed me. My fluttering, fond, but honest heart, was robbed of peace, and scarcely hoped ever again to enjoy its beloved tranquility. I had no occasion to feign myself sick; alas! I was so in reality; my strength, my colour, almost my life, had failed me, from the time my ears had received the killing narration. Could I have distrusted Providence, or repined at its Almighty, and, however obscure, its just decrees, I should have complained of my hard fate, in thus being tossed about by more uncertain things than winds and waves, the inclination of a fantastick, merciless race of mortals.

How

How does distress heighten devotion, which in prosperity is apt to grow languid; with what ardent zeal did I address the Almighty, and to his best will resign myself; prayed for a continuance of the happiness that fatal day had interrupted, or if that petition was presumptuous, and I might not dictate to his wisdom, which watches over all his works, I only begged that I might preserve untainted the virtue he had given me, improve the portion I was born with, and not live to see myself swerve from his most righteous laws, but that his grace would still vouchsafe to protect the creature of his power, the dependant on his mercy.

When I arrived, I found Lord Dorchester waiting for me at my house. He perceived I was very ill, and seemed greatly concerned at it; my illness excused my conversing, for which, indeed, I was but ill qualified. He tried with his enchanting tenderness to soothe my pains; but I was now acting the hypocrite, complaining of my head, while my heart was the only sufferer; and

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that was more distressed than relieved by his care and fondness. The scene was difficult for me to support, and I was glad when Lord Larborough came in. As soon as supper was over I left them, but went into a closet, the door of which I had purposely set open. I was no sooner in appearance gone, than Lord Dorchester began to express the great uneasiness he was under at seeing me so ill, as he was afraid it might be the beginning of a fit of sickness. Lord Larborough took this opportunity of bringing on the discourse he aimed at. "Indeed, my friend," said he, "I am not surprized at the greatness of your apprehensions, to be robbed by death of the fruit of all your schemes, all your attendance, generosity and love, would mortify a man less passionately fond than yourself."

"If you do not wish to be troubled with a very bad companion all this evening," replied Lord Dorchester, "mention not the word death. The thought of her suffering any pain, is more than I can support, with-
" out

“out a considerable diminution of spirits. But, whatever happens, I can never think I have been unrewarded for any thing my love has made me do, if it has hitherto rendered her happy, which I flatter myself it has done. Her kind and innocent marks of affection would recompence me for any pain or trouble, whereas my care of her has been my greatest joy.”

“Well,” answered Lord Larborough, “I will no farther affront your generosity, though I cannot flatter you so far as to say you have acted through a mere love of that virtue. If those godlike qualities were to be found unmixed among mankind, I should sooner expect to see them in you than in any one; but, in truth, my friend, sense has had as great a share in the direction of your actions as sentiment; pray which has been most gratified?”

“As for gratification,” said Lord Dorchester, “sentiment has had much the best time of it. Ophelia is certainly above us mortals; she never

“ condescends like Goddeses of old,
“ to divest herself, for one moment, of
“ her divinity; and for any hopes of
“ amendment I can see, I may worship
“ my deity till the end of my life,
“ without finding her once propitious to
“ her votary’s wishes.”

“ I am afraid,” answered Lord Larborough, “ you understand the arts of
“ love less than those of any other kind,
“ or you could not now be as far from
“ your hopes, as when you first took
“ her from her solitude.”

“ I believe,” replied Lord Dorchester, “ I may practice the arts of love
“ with less skill for having so much of
“ the reality. I have so true an esteem
“ and respect for her, that I reverence
“ her virtues and her understanding,
“ while I adore her person; those awful
“ sensations are great retarders of a
“ lover’s progress; but yet I flatter
“ myself with a different opinion from
“ yours. I cannot help thinking I
“ have made a considerable step to-
“ wards success. I have gained her
“ heart, my Lord, and I take that to
“ be the sure road to her person. It
“ is

“ is impossible a woman should always
“ resist both her love and her lover;
“ they must prevail in time, how
“ great soever her prudence may be,
“ or I shall never believe woman was
“ made out of the rib of a man, and
“ yet differ so much from our natures:
“ I already begin to suspect that Miss
“ Lenox sprung from another creation;
“ and was made out of some more icy
“ composition than the rest of woman-
“ kind. But yet, trust me, however
“ cold she may naturally be, her ten-
“ derness for me, my passionate love
“ for her, with that innocence which
“ takes from her all suspicion, conse-
“ quently all fear of having the object
“ of her affections watching for a com-
“ plying moment, must, in time, yield
“ me the reward for my long ser-
“ vices and disappointments. I am
“ certainly a coward; for I have not
“ yet ventured to attempt any li-
“ berties which a vestal might not
“ permit. When my spirits are at the
“ highest, and I think my passion no
“ longer to be hid, there is a purity
“ around her, such awful purity in
“ every

“ every look and word, that I bow
“ to virtue, and worship it in her fair
“ form.” There is more innocence in
“ her careffes, than can be found in the
“ coldness of any other woman. In-
“ stead of encouraging my hopes, they
“ damp them while they charm me;
“ and shew the best affections in such
“ beauty, that I cannot forbear calling
“ myself a villain, for not being more
“ like her.” “ And pray,” said Lord
Larborough, “ by what means do you
“ make peace with yourself?”

“ By reflecting, that if she loves me,
“ she will remain very happy,” replied
Lord Dorchester; “ marriage is of hu-
“ man invention; for was it a neces-
“ sary ceremony we must be all bas-
“ tards, as we have no reason to believe
“ Adam and Eve had the sanction of
“ the priest for their union. Their’s
“ was the wedlock of hearts, the true
“ matrimony of affection, I and my
“ Ophelia will, like our first parents,
“ love by our own and nature’s li-
“ cence, with more warmth, more ten-
“ derness, sincerity and constancy, than
“ the obedient servants of the church,
“ the

“ the slaves of custom can boast. We
“ will love to the end of our lives,
“ always assured of each other’s affec-
“ tions, by unabated assiduity and ten-
“ derness. Necessity shall have no hand
“ in our union, for I will make a set-
“ tlement on her, which shall render
“ her perfectly independent of me. We
“ shall be linked only by love, and
“ therefore cannot doubt of the strength
“ of the chain while neither breaks it.”

“ A most noble rapture truly,” in-
terrupted Lord Larborough; “ since
“ eternal constancy is your scheme, why
“ not marry? Surely wedlock should
“ only terrify the fickle.”

“ Have I not often told you,” said
Lord Dorchester, “ with how much
“ justice I dislike matrimony? The ill
“ fate of all my family in that state,
“ has created an insurmountable aver-
“ sion to it in me. Besides, I am more
“ unfit for it than any man, as being so
“ fearful of losing the affections of one
“ I love, that I could never be easy
“ while it was her interest to live with
“ me. It is true, I know, and love
“ Ophelia’s sincerity, but I am equally

I 4 “ acquainted

“ acquainted with my own temper ; I
“ could fear her truth and openness
“ of heart should be corrupted by our
“ vile customs ; she might give herself
“ to me in marriage out of prudence
“ and interest. I would receive her as
“ the gift of love alone. Her heart
“ must give her to me, and mine re-
“ ceive her as the pure votary of love ;
“ mine and only mine, exclusive of all
“ prudential, all lucrative views. This
“ is the truest bliss my heart can know.
“ But in the midst of all this glorious
“ imaginary felicity, comes across this
“ painful question, oh ! my friend,
“ when can such virtue be subdued ? I
“ fear she is exalted above human
“ weaknesses, though to leave the dis-
“ posal of herself to the priest, rather
“ than to her heart, would be only
“ compliance with servile custom, and
“ not virtue, which can never be the gift
“ of a foolish ceremony ; it consists in
“ constancy, not words ; and we will be
“ more constant than licensed matrimo-
“ nial couples, who love from duty ;
“ whose passions are so cool, they ask
“ leave to burn, requiring the sanction
“ of

“ of a cold, withered, insensible priest,
 “ to whom all powerful nature is made
 “ to relinquish her sway. Ophelia
 “ ought more than any one to obey
 “ that first parent, who has lavishly
 “ dispensed to her her best gifts. She
 “ who still enjoys her natural inno-
 “ cence, who has made uncommon
 “ progress in the knowledge of all
 “ good, and yet remains as ignorant
 “ of evil as on the day she was first
 “ numbered among the species she was
 “ born to eclipse, has no occasion to be
 “ confined to political rules, made to
 “ keep those in order who have not a
 “ better guide within their own minds.”

“ Pray,” answered Lord Larbo-
 rough, “ do not treat all the rest of
 “ women-kind with such contempt.
 “ The ignorance you boast of is not
 “ meritorious; if it is, you are the per-
 “ son who should have the honour of
 “ it. Is there any virtue in not know-
 “ ing the evil she has never seen? You
 “ have spread the veil which has con-
 “ cealed it all from her eyes; and then,
 “ like a true irrational lover, admire
 “ her for not seeing what was not visi-

“ ble to her. Her part is natural ;
“ your contrivance is all that can create
“ wonder, and I can never think of it
“ without surprize. However, I can-
“ not imagine it possible to continue
“ this ignorance, where matter for in-
“ struction is so frequent as in this
“ town, and to which some of the ac-
“ quaintance you have introduced her,
“ are not novices.”

“ You must have been wrapt in cold
“ indifference all your life-time,” re-
plied Lord Dorchester, “ or you would
“ know that nothing is impossible to
“ a true lover. A short acquaintance
“ with her principles, shewed me the
“ necessity of preserving her from all
“ suspicion of my design. The only
“ method was to keep her in ignorance
“ of the ways of men in this enlight-
“ ened corner of the world. From
“ the dull simplicity and innocence
“ in which she was bred, the least
“ shadow of vice of any kind shocks
“ her, by which I was convinced her
“ prejudices in favour of lawful uni-
“ ons must be great. This excited
“ my invention, and I considered all
“ ways

“ ways of keeping the difference of
“ our manners from her knowledge.
“ I instructed her servant, but with-
“ out imparting my reasons to her;
“ and as I furnished her with books,
“ I have carefully excluded all by
“ which she could form a notion of
“ any customs that might raise sus-
“ picions in her mind; and this I have
“ found possible without retarding any
“ useful improvement of her under-
“ standing. When the heart does
“ not dictate a probability of evil in
“ others, the owner is easier deceived
“ into a good opinion of mankind
“ than you imagine. I had a desire of
“ bringing her into the world, think-
“ ing it would amuse and make her
“ happier, which, next to my own
“ happiness in one point, is my first
“ consideration; but here was my great
“ difficulty; how to prevent her see-
“ ing, when the object was before her
“ eyes, puzzled me. However, hav-
“ ing great confidence in female in-
“ vention, I opened my whole scheme
“ to my cousin, Lady Palestine, who, I
“ knew,

“ knew, would willingly assist me, as
“ she is one of Cupid’s best friends ;
“ and, like a good woman, has so equal
“ a love for her neighbour and herself,
“ that she is glad to help them in
“ any way wherein she would be in-
“ dustriously gratified. She, in this
“ respect, lives up to the golden rule;
“ and does to others as she would they
“ should do unto her. This made her
“ fit for my purpose. The art she
“ has had to keep herself in high
“ fashion, and be carested by the
“ world, and even by such whose
“ behaviour and character give one
“ room to believe that the merits
“ I found in her were of no use nor
“ recommendation to them, made her
“ acquaintance proper for my honest,
“ my innocent Ophelia, at the same
“ time she was useful to me. I esteem
“ the purity of my angel’s heart, and
“ the goodness of her principles too
“ highly, to introduce her into com-
“ pany that might pervert either. It
“ would be impolitick to lessen the me-
“ rits of the object of our affections in
“ so

“ so essential a point, in order to gain
“ the possession of their persons. I have
“ had great reason to be pleased with
“ my choice: Lady Palestine has ex-
“ celled herself in the management of
“ this affair; and some fortunate cir-
“ cumstances have assisted our de-
“ sign. Miss Lenox’s great unhappi-
“ ness at being observed and looked at;
“ which was the necessary consequence
“ of her appearing in publick, was of
“ excellent service to us. We advised
“ her to be silent as to the place of her
“ birth, and all the passages of her past
“ life, and this on pretence of saving
“ her the pain of universal observa-
“ tion, which otherwise, by their no-
“ velty, would be excited. She com-
“ plied; the rest has been our care.
“ You know we have reported her a
“ relation of mine, of a large for-
“ tune, left by a dying father to my
“ guardianship.

“ By these little deceits, her repu-
“ tation has hitherto continued unble-
“ mished. I verily believe the envy of
“ the world would by this time have
“ spent

“ spent a little of it's venom in slander, had any other woman been in her place; but the innocence and openness of heart expressed in her countenance, damps all suspicion, and disarms scandal of it's sting.

“ I have likewise contrived to prevent all intimacies with any of her own sex, except my useful cousin, least conversing with them, might overthrow my scheme. I was some time ago, a little uneasy at a great disposition I perceived in her towards Miss Baden, who was not unwilling to cultivate her acquaintance. I could not wonder at either; without seeing all the bad qualities which many possess, the good in Miss Baden's disposition shines so clearly, that it could not escape the observation of Ophelia, who sees by the light of reason, that best distinguisher of truth. An intimacy between them seemed natural, and I feared the ill effects of it; but my uneasiness was perceived by my lovely charmer, and, I believe, a kind though silent compliance

“ pliance with it, put a stop to all increase of acquaintance.

“ I found she construed my dislike into jealousy. She has not the least notion why we should be jealous but of our friend’s affections, and in that case, it must be equally excited by man or woman, who seems likely to share them with us.

“ I began now to have fewer apprehensions than ever of her learning the customs of our sex. Time and success have hardened me; but instead of it another arises, which is what I have already mentioned, that I shall never find the unguarded moment I have so long waited for. To declare my intentions, or give her reason to find them out, would be losing all my hope. My sole dependence is on the frailty of human kind, and she seems to be void of any. I thought I had only a woman to resist me; who would have expected that an angel should be hid in a cottage, while we frail mortals inhabit palaces?”

I had

I had now heard too much; my doubts were turned into the most painful certainty; and I could not stay to listen to more of a conversation, every word of which gave fresh pain to my heart. So I retired out of another door, and went to my own room.

C H A P.

C H A P. XLV.

UPON retiring to my chamber, I found some ease from the liberty of indulging the sighs and tears which I had been obliged to suppress while I was so near the cause of all my grief. I was the whole night incapable of every thing but lamenting my unhappy lot, in being among a people with whom I was so unequally matched. The violence of my affliction persuaded me that I hated the man who had occasioned it; but as dejection succeeded to distraction, for by no other name can I call my first emotions, the necessity of leaving one whose aim was my destruction, informed me more certainly of the true state of my heart. I found it still repined at the thought of absenting myself from him, whose presence ought to have raised detestation in me. But this only served to determine me the more strongly to fly from that place, where I no longer could be safe, since I was

was myself my enemy; and resolved, if I could not command my heart, at least to punish it.

The past might give me some room to hope success for the future; but I would not trust to a confidence which oftener destroys than saves, while diffidence is a wise preserver, and the best defence of the weak. To stay till we are sensible of our frailty, is remaining too long; I was desirous to prevent the sense of it, and not run the hazard of being obliged to reproach myself for my own weakness.

Convinced that I was unhappy, I was, however, determined not to be criminal, and I could not hide from myself the danger to which my open and artless temper must expose me, when I had so deceitful and designing an adversary. The contest was too unequal to venture; but it seemed to me as dishonourable to attack the artless with arts and deceit, as to attempt the life of one who is not armed for his defence. I wondered at the ingratitude that could wish to turn a woman's affection into the means of making her wretched, and rob her of the pleasure
of

of being esteemed, and of the heart-felt joy arising from the consciousness of deserving to be so.

I was fixed in the resolution of leaving my house, and of concealing myself from Lord Dorchester, till I could contrive my return to my cottage, where I might seek for peace, and endeavour to forget a vicious race, whom I had known only to suffer by them. I thought it would not be safe to attempt this immediately, as I could not doubt but my Lord would take all possible means of discovering my retreat; and, suspecting my real intention, would more diligently watch the road. Where to conceal myself I knew not; but had no hopes of safety among those who were acquainted with me. I had now learnt to distrust every one, and my too fond heart found some resource in believing no man was less an enemy to virtue than Lord Dorchester.

The following night I fixed for my elopement, with which I dared trust nobody, but was to transact it without
any

any guide or adviser but resolution and fear.

Lord Dorchester called several times in the morning, but I did not rise till noon, in order to avoid seeing him till I had acquired a sufficient composure of mind to enable me to converse.

In the afternoon he came again as I expected. I feared his sight, though he had more reason to fear mine, the guilty only have cause to tremble; but the great change which was to succeed this visit, made it appear dreadful to me. I had endeavoured to practice some worldly arts; I thought it was strange if I had lived so long here without acquiring the power of dissimulation; I tried to conceal my grieved heart under a smiling countenance, that I might not either puzzle my Lord, or give him room for suspicion. But I had esteemed my own abilities too highly; I was less improved than I could have wished.

Lord Dorchester, at first coming in, addressed me with inexpressible tenderness, and concern for my health. The variety of emotions from the joy I felt

felt in the proofs of his affection, which would have made even sickness delightful, with the pain that attended the thought of the bad designs it had given birth to, and yet how much I must suffer in relinquishing the greatest happiness of my life, overcame my resolution, and brought such a crowd of images to my mind, as drew a flood of tears from my eyes, which never ceased flowing for a quarter of an hour together, during the whole evening. My Lord appeared greatly concerned at these signs of grief, and was importunate to know the reason of them. I could only attribute them to distemper, and, according to the fashion of the place, complain of my spirits. This did not make him easy; he declared, he could not forbear suspecting some hidden cause; and, by the many assurances of his constant and increasing affection with which he endeavoured to remove my melancholy, I perceived he imagined me a prey to jealous fancies. I was glad his thoughts took that turn; for I was in great fear that my weakness, in thus shewing

shewing the situation of my mind might have created better-grounded suspicions; especially at his going away, which was not till very late. I had not power to tell him it was time he should leave me, and he was not inclined to make that discovery himself; but at last, the watchman forced him to observe the hour, and care of my health induced him to obey its call to rest. I was determined this should be the last interview I would ever have with him. The thought that I should never see him more, had so violent an effect on my depressed spirits, that as soon as he was out of the room I fainted away. I believe it was not long before I recovered my senses. I found myself in his arms, and my maid rubbing my temples, while he was holding a bottle for me to smell to. He had, as I afterwards learnt, returned on the noise I made in falling, and finding me on the floor, called my maid to assist him in bringing me again to life. The joy I felt from the tenderness of his behaviour, on my coming to myself, was ill suited to
my

my intention. It was long before he would leave me, but the second parting was not so bad as the first. To get quit of my maid, I was obliged to go to bed. As soon as she was out of the room, I dressed myself anew, and sat down to write to Lord Dorchester, to the following purpose.

My LORD,

“ As little as a man can deserve to
“ find a place in the thoughts of one
“ on whom his views have been so
“ ungenerous and low, yet I cannot
“ forbear informing you, that a disco-
“ very of your base designs has rendered
“ it necessary for me to fly you. Was
“ my pride equal to my love, I should
“ be ashamed, that in our last inter-
“ views I discovered so much sorrow in
“ parting with one who never had any
“ true affection for me. But why
“ should I blush at not suspecting
“ intentions in you, which I thought
“ no heart had been bad enough to har-
“ bour? My own made me a dupe to
“ the appearance of yours. It was not
“ difficult

“ difficult for me to believe that the ge-
“ nerosity, the tenderness, the esteem
“ you appeared to have for me, were
“ real. Though I deserved little of
“ it, it seemed to me less injurious to
“ suppose you mistaken than deceit-
“ ful. The understanding of the wisest
“ man may err, but I did not imagine
“ the heart of any one could be so
“ corrupted. I own, that at this mo-
“ ment I still repay in real fondness
“ all the arts you practice to make
“ me believe it mutual; in the midst
“ of my resentment my love is as
“ strong as ever. I am sensible you
“ have for ever destroyed my happi-
“ ness; I can never enjoy a moment’s
“ comfort absent from you. The hap-
“ py composure of my mind is turned
“ into distraction; my constitution is
“ not equal to the sorrows that attack
“ it. But this is not my grief. I am
“ the creature of Providence, and must,
“ without repining, wait its decrees; if,
“ without ingratitude, I might wish to
“ lose the life it has given me, I
“ should pray for death as the de-
“ sirable end of a miserable being.
“ One

“ One effect I would gladly hope my
“ sufferings may have on you; let them
“ shew you how wretched you aimed at
“ making one who deserved not to re-
“ ceive so much evil at your hands:
“ Think what torment the success of
“ your vile arts must have given me,
“ since to avoid the chance of it I can
“ without hesitation reduce myself to
“ so great a misfortune as leaving the
“ joy of my life, your company! Let
“ this deter you for the future from
“ leading others into the same unhappy
“ circumstances. I wish an amend-
“ ment of your principles, for your
“ own benefit; for I feel a sincere pity
“ for the ignorance you must live in
“ of the greatest pleasures, those arising
“ from a truly affectionate, generous,
“ pure and honest heart. As for my-
“ self, it can no longer be of farther
“ consequence to my peace; I shall
“ not know even what passes here; I
“ will not remain among a people to
“ whom I am so ill suited. Opinion
“ had raised you almost to a deity;
“ finding you fall so far below what
VOL. II. K “ even

“ even a human creature should be,
“ I can’t help doubting myself also,
“ and therefore will never see you
“ more. I will return to my little cot-
“ tage, where I shall behold no actions
“ but what are just and consistent;
“ where innocence is no temptation
“ to vice, nor made a means towards
“ the possessor’s destruction. In that
“ dear solitude, my love will be repaid
“ by affection, by the only worthy ob-
“ ject of it, and our hearts united with
“ sincerity and truth. There I lived,
“ blessed, indeed, in innocence; all
“ that was dear to me within my
“ sight; I had nothing to regret, no-
“ thing to sigh for, no thought, no
“ wish to suppress; actuated by vir-
“ tue, with virtue alone I loved my
“ single friend; happy in knowing no
“ more, I enjoyed a constant state of
“ contentment. Think, my Lord, from
“ what you have taken me, and what
“ misery you have brought on her,
“ who, notwithstanding all distance,
“ the impossibility of seeing you again,
“ and the great reason she has to
“ hate

“ hate you, must ever remain attached
“ to you in the tenderest manner!
“ This is your doing; this the effect
“ you call love! This the reward of
“ mine! But why should I reproach
“ you, when I cannot resent as I ought?
“ I am too little mistress of myself to
“ write more. Heaven preserve you!
“ may you never feel remorse enough
“ to give you equal pain to that I en-
“ dure! I would have your heart im-
“ prove by reason, and not by suffer-
“ ing. Once more accept my prayers,
“ my best wishes; you are the only ob-
“ ject I have for them, I myself ex-
“ cluded, since all I ought to wish for,
“ is a total forgetfulness of you; and
“ if I cannot part with your image,
“ misery is attached to it. If you can
“ help it, do not quite forget me;
“ think of me as one who has such
“ an affection for you, as in the great
“ world cannot be equalled; think of
“ me as anxious for your happiness,
“ while I am suffering by you; who
“ could receive any evil by self-con-
“ demnation rather than part with you,
K 2 “ rather

“ rather than once say adieu. But it
“ must be so. The God you have of-
“ fended, forgive and bless you !”

This letter was not written without torrents of tears, with which my paper was so blotted, that it was scarcely legible; but the interruptions my sorrow gave, took up so much of the little time left me, that I had not leisure to write it over again, and if I had I might not have mended it. As soon as it was finished, I laid it where I imagined it would be found, though not the first moment I was missing. I then put as much money in my pocket as I thought requisite. Without scrupling to save myself at the expence of the person who had reduced me to the want of such assistance, I took no more than I believed necessary; if I had, it would not have been so justifiable. I loaded myself with linen and other things that I might want, and could conveniently carry. The jewels, watches, trinkets, and every thing valuable, I put up with the money in my

my bureau, and inclosed the key of it in the letter to my Lord. Grief purifies the heart. So much had it lessened my vanity, that things which, in possession, had given me a foolish pleasure, were now of no more worth in my eyes than a piece of glass. By this time day began to dawn. I stole down stairs, and unbarring the street door as gently as I could, I went out. I got through that, and the adjacent streets, as quick as possible, and walked a great way, before people were stirring, without knowing where I was. I went into the first house where lodgings were to be let, and the people up, and hired a room, well satisfied with my situation, because it was at a great distance from that I lately lived in, and from my Lord's house. I learnt I was in a part of the city, and took a back room, that I might run no hazard of being seen from the street. The people where I lodged were quiet and civil, and too busy to be very curious.

As soon as I had hired my chamber, I shut myself in it, and indulged my grief with greater freedom than I had

yet ventured to do. The tears which had only fallen gently down my face as I walked through the streets, for I could not confine them entirely, now came with double force, and did not cease till I grew so weary with the agitation of my mind, want of rest, and a walk far too long for my decayed strength, that I fell asleep for some hours.

This refreshed my body, but could not relieve my heart; that remained the same, or rather acquired new strength only to grieve with more violence.

I grew very ill by night, and kept my bed for two days. From that time my health began to mend, and I became somewhat more composed.

C H A P.

C H A P. XLVI.

LORD Larborough had placed spies upon me, by which means he learnt the place of my abode, and came the day after my escape; but I was not able to see him till the latter end of that week, and was then but very unfit for company. He addressed me in the most affectionate manner, “ lamented my unhappy fate, and the
“ unworthy hands into which I had
“ fallen. Applauded my resolution in
“ leaving Lord Dorchester, and admired
“ my innocence. He ardently wished
“ he could have saved me from the
“ impending danger which threatened
“ me, without making my happiness a
“ sacrifice to my virtue. You heard,” said he, “ lovely Ophelia, how I en-
“ deavoured to shew my friend that
“ he ought not to be averse to mar-
“ rying you. I had done much more
“ at other times; I have represented
“ to him the great charm of your
“ innocence, which should preserve
K 4 “ itself

“ itself by disarming all bad designs.
“ I proved to him an alliance with
“ you could not hurt his pride, since
“ it must do honour to a man of
“ any rank. It could not excuse the
“ fears he expressed of matrimony,
“ as your numerous virtues secured him
“ from every evil that can attend the
“ state of wedlock. In point of in-
“ terest no man could be so bigotted
“ to money as to think it comparable
“ to your worth. Others might bring
“ him gold, you would make him
“ possessor of more wealth, of a no-
“ bler kind of riches, than Peru or
“ Mexico could yield. These are the
“ arguments I have used to persuade
“ him to marry you. But his notions
“ are so depraved, that all I could say
“ made no impression on his mind;
“ indeed, it was vain to hope it would;
“ if his love, and the fairest miracle
“ of virtue, could not dispose him to
“ justice, how should my arguments
“ have that power? They could not be
“ so prevalent as every look, every
“ word and action of the innocent
“ Ophelia must have been, to any one
“ who

“ who had the smallest seeds of virtue
“ in their breast. I should have be-
“ lieved the most debauched man liv-
“ ing could not have harboured a mo-
“ mentary thought against the virtue
“ which appeared so amiable. Pardon
“ me the blasphemies I uttered against
“ you in the conversation you over-
“ heard. They all agree with my real
“ sentiments; my heart bled for what
“ you were suffering, while I treated
“ his opinion so highly; but I was
“ obliged to put that force on myself,
“ to make him more openly declare
“ sentiments which I would have
“ given my life to have changed into
“ such as would have been agreeable
“ to your wishes, and due to your
“ merits. It was with the utmost dif-
“ ficulty I performed my task, and
“ prosecuted a discourse which tore
“ my heart by friendly sympathy with
“ your’s.”

This elaborate speech of Lord Lar-
borough’s surprized me a little; it seem-
ed so honest and affectionate, that dur-
ing some parts, I believed his disposition
was suitable to his expressions; but he

mixed so much flattery with his panegyrics on my virtue, that I told him,
“ I hoped I had, indeed, enough to
“ preserve me from committing any
“ criminal action; but where was the
“ miracle of this? thousands would do
“ the same. If it preserved me from
“ censure, I had all I could require
“ from it; but I saw no reason to
“ commend me so highly for having
“ only done my duty, and that merely
“ when one virtue was concerned; a
“ small portion to be proud of, when
“ we ought to be possessed of so many;
“ he could not have given me more
“ praise, had I acted up to the laws
“ of general perfection. In behaving
“ differently from what I had done, I
“ should have been very criminal; but
“ I could scarcely think myself quite
“ justified, unless I had that proper
“ love for virtue which would make
“ me hate the person who should form
“ vile schemes, as well as induce me to
“ avoid him; whereas I had not arrived even at anger. Grief possessed
“ my whole soul, and left no room for
“ any other sentiment. I still loved to
“ excess,

“ excess, the man to whom I owed my
“ sufferings; and while I fled from him
“ and resolved never again to see him,
“ I endeavoured to excuse him, and
“ blamed only education and pernicious
“ custom, which had, by corrupting
“ his principles, rendered me
“ a most unhappy woman.” My tears
flowed almost incessantly. Lord Larborough joined in them, and wept too, till I grew convinced of the pure friendship he professed. He frequently exclaimed against “ the baseness of a
“ man, who could mean me ill; and
“ with all the appearance of sincerity
“ declared, how incapable he should
“ have been of such behaviour, had
“ he been blessed with my love; he
“ would have adored me with a pure
“ devotion, have looked on Hymen as
“ his tutelar deity, and have esteemed
“ himself the happiest of mankind if
“ I would have conferred an eternal
“ obligation on him by becoming his
“ wife.”

Many more things he said to raise his own character, and blacken Lord Dorchester's, which served only to increase

crease my affection, as I grieved as much for my Lord's depravity, as for my own sufferings, independently of the connection between them.

All Lord Larborough said, was uttered with such an air of tenderness, and mixed with so many expressions of fondness, that, at last, I began to think his sentiments were beyond those of friendship, which I thought I must detest in a country where people can be led by love to do actions so unworthy of themselves, and so inconsistent with the rest of their character. I was fully convinced of it, when after finding fault with my lodging, and lamenting "that I, who ought to receive
" the services of mankind, (for he
" mixed the most fulsome flattery with
" every thing he said) should be void
" of necessary attendance and convenience, he solicited me to accompany him to one he would find out
" for me, where I should be served in
" a manner worthy of me, and all
" possible care taken to alleviate my
" grief, and assist time in conquering
" it." This proposal startled me. I
told

told him, " that flattery was no means
" of pleasing me. I looked on it in
" no better light than as an indirect
" accusation of an insufferable vanity
" and folly, since it shewed an expect-
" tation of being believed. That in
" a country where benevolence and
" justice reigned, I might, indeed,
" expect so much of the service of
" mankind, as tended to that mutual
" defence due from all fellow crea-
" tures to each other ; but as here mo-
" ney only obtained that assistance
" which humanity should give, I had
" little title to any, nor the least oc-
" casion for those venal services, which
" I had been accustomed to perform for
" myself. If reason and proper indig-
" nation could not conquer my afflic-
" tion, I feared it was beyond the pow-
" er of any thing else to perform it.
" But that his Lordship's offer sur-
" prized me ; he seemed to have forgot
" that he was inviting me into a situa-
" tion which I had learnt from him was
" so unusual in England, that it was
" always thought criminal." He re-
plied, that " he allowed the truth
" of

“ of what I alledged; but he would
“ remove all objections from the mali-
“ cious censures of mankind, by keep-
“ ing every circumstance concerning
“ me so private, and ordering his own
“ visits so prudently, that no one should
“ have room to suspect that I was not
“ wholly mistress of myself, and every
“ thing belonging to me.” I told him,
that “ hitherto I had been only un-
“ fortunate; what imprudence I had
“ been guilty of, must be laid to the
“ charge of unavoidable ignorance; but
“ if I was to accept his offer, I should
“ esteem myself greatly blameable. I
“ thought it was wrong to act con-
“ trary to the customs of the people
“ among whom we live, unless in con-
“ tradiction to their vices. Want of
“ concealment argued a degree of
“ guilt, and whether arising from vice
“ or only folly, it was our duty to
“ avoid it. Nothing more was required
“ to render me unhappy, than to be
“ obliged to make a secret of my
“ thoughts and actions. Besides, I
“ made no doubt but the suspicions of
“ mankind were founded on experience
“ and

“ and probability, which was a sufficient reason to induce me to avoid giving cause for them. That in my opinion a woman who did one imprudent thing premeditatedly, gave good grounds to suspect her of more; and was guilty, at least, of being the cause of all the untruths people thought and said about her, which was a greater load than I chose to have on my conscience. That I was determined to appear guiltless, as well as to be so; and therefore would continue where I was, or change only to some place of my own providing.” He spent no small time in endeavouring to persuade me, that necessary concealments would be no pain to any one blessed with the consciousness of innocence.” But I, at last, convinced him that I would not consent to it. It was with difficulty I prevailed on him to leave me to my own thoughts, though it was really late at night. I cannot say they were to his honour. The treachery I had discovered made me now as suspicious as before I was the contrary, which
must

must naturally tend to the disadvantage of Lord Larborough, since nothing could give me more reason to believe he harboured some bad design, than his endeavours to draw me into a way of life of which he had told me the impropriety, when it served to get me away from Lord Dorchester. Could I forbear suspecting them of being equally culpable? It was happy for me that they were so; for as I fear humanity would not have been of so much service to me as Lord Larborough's jealousy and desire to get me into his power, I could not attribute what he had done to any other cause; since he could wish to lead me into part of the evil from which he had strongly represented the necessity of my flying. I had reason, however, to thank Heaven that the bad intentions of one ill person thus saved me from the dangers threatened me by another, equally my enemy; and could not hate Lord Larborough for his sentiments, since they turned so much to my benefit. But I feared I might find him some obstruction to my departure, and without that addition I had too many impediments,

impediments, and no one to assist me. I dared not trust any body ; and had a mind too ill at ease to take any measures for myself. I could only grieve for my misfortunes, incapable of forming a rational thought towards redressing them. How often, in my wishes for the friendly relief of death, was I checked by the remembrance of my kind parent, the nurse and instructor of my youth ! But for the consolation I hoped my presence would afford her, the grave would have been my sole desire ; for that alone I thought could bring me ease. But I preferred the suffering any evil to the increase of the pain I had already involuntarily given her ; and this consideration controuled my ardent wishes for its kind hand.

When Lord Larborough found neither persuasion nor flattery could prevail upon me to put myself into his power ; he tried whether fear would not be more his friend. He pestered me every day with his visits, and invented new stories to alarm me. At one time he pretended Lord Dorchester had discovered where I was, and therefore “ thought
“ his

“ his service might not be unexceptionable in procuring me some safer asylum.” But I told him, that “ being less known in the town than his Lordship, I could more securely perform that office for myself;” fully determined to conceal my new habitation with equal care from both. I gave orders to the people of the house to admit no one that wanted to see me; and tried every means to prevail on Lord Larborough to leave me, that I might seek another lodging, for in one respect he had succeeded, he had frightened me extremely. But, notwithstanding my most pressing intreaties, and a good deal of uncivility, for my patience was exhausted, yet he would not go away till night: and then finding no enquiry had been made after me, I was pretty well convinced the whole was his own invention.

Another day he informed me I had got into a house of ill repute, opening to me a scene of iniquity as appeared to me entirely incredible; and I frankly told him, “ it was impossible
“ there should be such monsters in the
“ form

“ form of women as he represented;
“ but I was, above all, sure my land-
“ lady was not of that kind, the house
“ being extremely quiet, she having lit-
“ tle company, no young person be-
“ longing to her, and beside depend-
“ ing on a shop for her support, which
“ must render the infamous traffick he
“ mentioned contrary to her interest,
“ since it would put a stop to her
“ lawful and honest trade.”

I grew at length so disgusted with a man who could endeavour to increase the agony of my mind, out of such base views as these various falsehoods more and more convinced me actuated him, that I could scarcely endure his presence. While I believed he exposed Lord Dorchester's designs out of real humanity, I honoured him. Virtue is a man's first friend, and his regard for it is never put to a severer trial than when its interest clashes with the schemes of those whom he most loves; and therefore he who gives it its true preference is greatly to be applauded. But Lord Larborough's motives made his behaviour treacherous, and the discovery of them turned

turned all the gratitude I had at first felt towards him, to Providence, who had a better right to it. To that was I indebted for my safety, which was secured by meeting with two men whose views were equally base, and both alike fixed on me. In the moments of my most excessive grief, I reflected on this as a blessing, and all my soul was filled with gratitude, when otherwise my wretchedness might have tempted me to an impious repining, that guiltless, and contrary to any voluntary steps of my own taking, I should, by various degrees, be led to the misery I endured.

I hoped that despair might at last incline Lord Larborough to assist me in my return to my cottage; but I had vainly flattered myself; he would not even give me any advice as to the manner I should contrive it; and instead of removing the difficulties that lay in my way, took a pleasure in starting new ones. All the benefit I reaped from a behaviour which he called ungrateful, was an abatement in the frequency of his visits; and that I confess was some reward.

C H A P.

C H A P. XLVII.

FOR a fortnight after I escaped from Lord Dorchester's, I had lived without seeing any one except Lord Larborough. But the people where I lodged, having as much pity for my melancholy as they had leisure to feel, were, at last, so pressing with me to drink tea with them, that I could no longer refuse it, though I was not very fit for company.

They had been so obliging as to order their servant to admit no body, in compliance with my desire; but before we parted, by mistake, she brought in a visitor, who, the maid knowing their regard to him, imagined must be agreeable. It was so indeed to me, for it proved to be Mr. South.

His behaviour when I was Mrs. Her-ner's prisoner, had created in me so much esteem, that I often begged my Lord to give him the first great living in his gift which should prove vacant, and he had promised me he would do it.

As

As desirous as I had been of remaining concealed, I could not be sorry to see Mr. South. He seemed rejoiced to meet with me again, and asked leave to wait on me the next morning; very much puzzled by the way I appeared in, as it differed greatly from the rank he imagined me of, by things he heard after my leaving his neighbourhood. I was not without my reasons for being glad to have some private conversation with him. I had sufficient proof that he was fit to be trusted, and hoped with his assistance to get soon from London.

He had not been long with me before I communicated to him the difficulties of my situation, and told him, that
“ although I had once rejected his
“ friendly offers of contriving my escape,
“ I should now be highly indebted to
“ him, if he would order my journey
“ for me in the way he thought most
“ safe from discovery. That I hoped
“ Lord Dorchester had taken for granted
“ that I was returned to my aunt before
“ that time, and therefore would have
“ no suspicions of finding me on the
“ road; but that to prevent it more
“ certainly,

“ certainly, it might be best to go round by some country that did not lie directly in the way.” He was greatly affected with my distress, and tried all the powers of persuasion to compose my mind. He offered to go to Lord Dorchester, in order to learn whether the certainty of being unable to succeed in his intentions might not make him glad to marry me. But this I absolutely refused. I had pride enough to think one with his principles did not deserve me; but there were considerations of still more weight; the account he gave of his aversion to marriage, and the impropriety of his own temper for that state, gave a woman reason to fear she might not be happy as his wife: I had already undergone the worst part of the pains of separation; it would have been very simple to subject myself to suffer it all over again, when by living longer with him, my affection was still increased; for with all his faults, I saw him amiable beyond expression. Besides, as well as I loved him, I would not have turned beggar, no not even for himself. What happiness could I have expected from a love
which

which I thought his actions proved was not founded on esteem ! Marriage would not make me see it in a different light, as I could not but know the desire of it arose in him merely from ungovernable passion, not principle, and I must therefore always fear his repenting it, as he could not believe me more worthy of being for ever united to him than before I left him.

I was so positive in the point, that Mr. South did not at all insist on the execution of his offer, but, on the contrary, commended my spirit, and appeared extremely pleased with it; the reason of which I did not find out till the next day, and then admired the generosity of his mind, in having been so ready to undertake an office wherein he certainly could not wish to be employed.

In the second visit, he begged I would forgive his renewing the offer I had once refused of the whole service of his life and fortune. He pressed it in the gentlest and tenderest manner imaginable. I told him, “ I was very sorry he had
“ still a wish depending on me; which
“ I could not grant; but that I was absolute in my determination to return
“ to

“ to my aunt, and on no account could
“ think of marrying a man whom I did
“ not love better than any other in the
“ world.” He replied, that “ he knew
“ his misfortune in that respect; but
“ would never repine at it, if I would
“ but grant him the second place in my
“ esteem, and give an opportunity to
“ his sincere affection to make him,
“ in time, happy in the possession of
“ my heart.” He added, that “ the
“ delicacy which made me averse to
“ marriage in the present situation of
“ my mind, was a sufficient assurance
“ that if I was married to him I would
“ join my endeavours to his to get the
“ better of a love which my principles
“ would not suffer me to encourage; he
“ would wait those happy effects with
“ patience, and with gratitude acknow-
“ ledge the present blessing of being
“ united to me; which he should prefer
“ to the possession of the whole heart of
“ any other woman.” In this manner
did he importune me long, and very re-
luctantly believed that I was immove-
able on this subject. I grieved to afflict
him, but what could I do? I could not

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marry

marry him; it was better, therefore, to repress his hopes at once. This topick made him so little fit for other conversation, that during this visit I got no intelligence with regard to my leaving London.

The next day he seemed easier than when he left me, and agreed to assist me as expeditiously as possible. We determined that I should take a coach to myself, and go through Northamptonshire into Oxfordshire, and then strike into the Western road; and he promised, that the day following he would seek for one. I wished him less slow in procuring the means of my departure; could I have transacted it myself, I should have proceeded with more haste. If an unhappy person could be so inhuman as to receive comfort from perceiving others were so as well as herself, I might have found some consolation the next morning from a scene to which I was witness; I happened, by chance, to be in a little room belonging to the people of the house, that had a door and a window into the shop; I saw a very pretty lady making some purchase there, when
at

at once I heard her scream, and a gentleman, whose face I could not see, express great satisfaction at meeting her. Her surprize gave him time to reproach her for "having so long avoided him, "refusing both his visits and his letters, denying him all opportunity of "justifying himself for an event in "which she must acknowledge he was "not to blame." She struggled to get from him, and begged he would let her go; but he held her hand so fast, that she was obliged to hear him protest the most violent passion, and assure her that "he "had taken all proper measures to bring "her to the appointed place, but had "been strangely disappointed in having "another lady brought instead of her."

Your Ladyship may imagine, that one whose heart, like mine, was filled with love, would be attentive to any thing that had the least relation to it; but I became still more so on what the gentleman said. By her endeavours to get from him, I, at last, saw his face, and perceived it was the person to whom I had been carried in my way to London.

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The

The lady declared she would raise an outcry if he did not go farther from her, and leave her at liberty. My landlady then spoke very sternly, and desired he would not trouble any one in her shop, but let the lady alone. He no sooner let go her hand, than she ran to the street door, but was stopped by his placing himself between her and it. When she found an attempt to get from him that way was vain, she turned short, and seeing the door which opened into the room where I was, she sprung with such force against it, that not shutting very well, she broke it open, and had bolted it on the inside before her lover could reach it.

Seeing me, she begged I would protect her, and keep her from that man. I carried her up stairs into my apartment, the door of which I fastened, and left the gentleman to the disposal of my landlady. The poor lady was no sooner eased of part of her fear, than she fell into a fit, which greatly alarmed me, but I durst not open the door to call any one. When she came to herself, she burst into tears. Her case,
in

in some degree, resembled mine, which made me accompany her in weeping.

She begged me again, not to let the man from whom she had fled come up stairs. I told her, "I had once ignorantly been her protector, and that now I would be so designedly." I then informed her that I was the person who had been carried to his Lordship's house when he expected her, and gave her an account of my reception, and what succeeded it.

She seemed to receive some satisfaction from finding herself with one who knew some part of her history, but expressed her astonishment at seeing me in such an habitation, having, as she said, "understood that I was a relation of Lord Dorchester; and from the disturbance he had been in, she could suppose no other; and yet the place in which I now lived was not at all proper for any of his family."

So many circumstances in what either said touched some tender part of the other's heart, that more was expressed by tears than by words. They were the only answers I made to her expressions

sions of surprize, till I found she misconstrued them, by her telling me, that “ she feared Lord Dorchester was
“ not proof against pride and beauty,
“ which, together, made men do very
“ wrong things. She had had a better
“ opinion of his Lordship; his behaviour
“ to her deserved eternal gratitude;
“ but she was afraid I had not an equal
“ obligation to him. She assured me
“ she pitied me sincerely, for that my
“ youth, and the very great amiableness
“ of his Lordship, were strong excuses,
“ if I observed a different behaviour for
“ the future, offering me any kind of
“ assistance in her power, and exhorting
“ me to a regular life.” These suspicions raised my indignation; I could not forbear answering with great warmth, that “ her opinion injured me greatly,
“ and it was cruel, by such an imputation, to add to the affliction I was
“ under.”

She begged my pardon in the handsomest manner, made all kind of submissions, and excused herself so well on the probability of the thing, that I forgave her, and complied with her request

quest in relating to her, in as few words as possible, the occasion of the difference she saw in my situation. She shewed a very real compassion for me, and offered to take me home with her to her aunt's, where they would carefully conceal me. But " I entreated her not
" even to mention me to that relation,
" as it must redound to my Lord's dishonour; and I thought myself so safe
" where I was, that it would not be advisable to change my abode." Her fear lest her lover should have set spies at our door, made her glad to remain the whole day with me; during which I learnt, that her father had faithfully kept the agreement made with him by Lord Dorchester, and her aunt had behaved very kindly to her; but that she had been obliged to make herself an absolute prisoner ever since she came to town, having never been able to venture into any publick place, or large company, for fear of meeting that vile man from whom she had been so fortunately delivered. " Not," she added, that " she apprehended any other harm from seeing
" him in publick but the keeping alive
L 4 " a passion

“ a passion which it was necessary to her
“ peace to extinguish ; she owned she
“ had not been able to do it, which made
“ her extremely unhappy, and had occa-
“ sioned her suffering excessively during
“ that interview between them to which
“ I had been a witness.”

Her lover omitted no means of seeing or writing to her, after he found where she was gone. He attempted to visit her continually, but always received a denial at the door; he contrived a thousand ways to convey letters to her; he often had them directed by other people, in hopes, that not knowing the hand, she would open them; but being constantly on her guard, she never read one, tho' for any thing she knew some of them might be from other people; but the only means she had of certainly avoiding to receive his letters was to accept none but such as were in the hands of her usual correspondents. Her care had answered so well, that she never before met him.

It was plain, from his discourse, that he imagined her behaviour proceeded from resentment at not having been carried to his house. I found she was as
weak

weak as myself; she was still very much in love with him, and appeared extremely unhappy, though she said she was grown easier before this unlucky interview. She told me, " her intention
" was to persuade her aunt to live in
" the country, where she hoped, by absence and reason, to conquer this unfortunate passion. For she took no joy
" in society, nor did it afford the least
" relief to her spirits. I once," added she, " by chance met his wife, who seemed not less unhappy than myself, and
" I felt almost equal pity for her. Instead of looking on her with the dislike
" generally borne to a rival, I conceived
" a kind of love for her as a fellow-sufferer, and could not forgive myself,
" for having, perhaps, been a means of
" creating part of the uneasiness which
" appeared in her countenance, though
" I had innocently offended against
" her; her Lord being the cruel injurer
" of both."

By enquiring into his character, she learnt that his Lady was a woman of very great fortune, whom he married in little more than a year before he came
L 5 into

into her father's neighbourhood, having gained her affections by a very assiduous courtship, to which her riches alone had tempted him.

The similitude between this young lady's fate and mine, disposed us well towards each other, and, before we parted, we should have been glad to have agreed on a means of meeting again, but I dared not venture to her end of the town, nor could she come where I was without danger of meeting the man she wished to avoid, as he might probably hope that a love so tender as he knew her's once was, would, when her first anger was abated, relent on what he had said, and that she would come again, where she might hope another time to see him. These considerations obliged us to take a final leave, only she insisted on my informing her, by a line, when I should be got safely out of town, which she advised me to attempt cautiously, but resolutely, tho' she owned she was sorry Lord Dorchester should have any cause to grieve; for notwithstanding his having acted an unworthy part, yet her gratitude for the great benefit he had conferred on her, made

made her wish him not to suffer by it; adding, that "I must allow this was due to one who had preserved her from being the unhappiest wretch on earth; but yet she should be very sorry that he should commit a wrong action, who had deserved so much honour from having prevented another from doing one." We exchanged mutual good wishes, and parted.

How much are the orders of Providence perverted! Our affections seem given as the sources of happiness, but by the bad qualities of mankind are frequently made the great springs of our misery. While they correspond with virtue, they alone give us a notion of true bliss; but when once they are connected with various kinds of vice, how wretched do they make both the vicious person, and those who are the objects of their ill-founded affections.

C H A P.

C H A P. XLVIII.

THE next morning, when Mr. South went to hire an equipage for me, as he had promised, he perceived a man sauntering in the inn yard, who observed him while he was making the bargain, and followed him at a distance, at his return. Mr. South fearing it might be some spy of Lord Dorchester's, went home, instead of coming to me. He learnt of the people of the house where he lodged, that after he was gone in, the man enquired his name, and some other particulars. He was so cautious lest the place of my abode should be discovered thro' his means, that he would not stir out of his lodgings till the following day; but he had not been long with me, before the same person came after him, having been directed from his house, with a message from Lord Dorchester, desiring to speak with him then, if he was at leisure. This surprized us, as they had not the least acquaintance, and made us suspect that, upon laying circum-

circumstances together, his Lordship thought Mr. South might be able to give him some information about me.

I was desirous of moving my habitation directly, that he might be able to say, with truth, he knew not where I was ; but he differed from me in this ; he said, that " Lord Dorchester had no
" power over me, nor could a man of
" honour attempt to use force to prevent my pursuing my intended journey ; that he would take care I should
" have the liberty of a free-born woman, and not be detained by any
" one. If his Lordship kept so strict
" a watch, I should scarcely be able
" to get off undiscovered ; and therefore it was better to do it openly and
" boldly ; offering to see me safe to
" the end of my journey." As his profession obliged him to some dependence on the favour of those who could assist in his preferment, and as I hoped Lord Dorchester would perform the promise he had given me, I rejected this proposal, very unwilling to do him an injury in return for the obligations he had conferred on me, by thus neglecting

lecting his own interest for my good. He replied, that "he could never receive so much true satisfaction from any thing, as from doing me service; that he should have only this one opportunity of enjoying so great a gratification; which, since I could not be prevailed with to make him happy, would be always reflected on by him as the darling moment of his life;" and that "it would be the highest cruelty to refuse the acceptance of his best services, the recollection of which would sweeten all his future cares or pains; and as I could give but a very imperfect account of the place from which I had been taken, he could not venture me with any other guide than himself." He left me without waiting for an answer.

His resolution distressed me. I could not bear to be detrimental to his interests, though I was convinced that with truth he said they weighed less with him than the pleasure of doing one friendly action: but such generosity should meet an equal return; and I would not in this have given way to him,

him, could I have avoided it. But his absence robbed me of the power of resisting his kind intention, and, indeed, the difficulty of finding out the place to which I was to be carried, from the very imperfect hints I could give, was so great, that there was some danger that none but so very assiduous a friend would have taken the pains to have sought it out; which he intended to have done while I remained on the borders of Wales till he could direct the vehicle in the right course. I was impatient to know the occasion of Lord Dorchester's sending for him, and yet it should have seemed of little importance to me. My departure was determined. If he would have fixed me out of his power, and complied with my terms, which the censoriousness of this country, founded on the dissolute manners of the people, would have required to make me acknowledged as innocent as I was, I would not have staid. I could not accept an obligation which I never would return. The customs of mankind, and the different opinion I had of my Lord to what I formerly entertained, rendered it

it impossible for me to live with the same frequent intercourse and perfect confidence which till then had been the source of all my joys. Without that, what charms could any place have for me? The more I reflected, the stronger was my resolution to fly it, as I would the pestilence, lest the contagion should reach me, and I be infected with their immorality.

While I was in the midst of these reflections, I heard some one coming up stairs to my room. Full of expectation of Mr. South, I ran to the door to meet him; but how great was my surprize at seeing, instead of him, Lord Dorchester. I cried out, and sunk into a chair, my strength failing me. He was in too great a rapture to think of the effect his sudden appearance had on me. How far above description were his transports on seeing me again! He embraced me with an eagerness, which, however innocent I once thought it, his own words had instructed me too well not to suffer; and the desire of repelling the familiarity, I believe, recovered me sooner than I should otherwise have been. All
he

he said were incoherent, passionate expressions of his joy. My sensations were more silent: I was as unable to speak as he was to preserve any regularity in what he said. Love, resentment, grief, and fear, divided my heart. Each alike strove for utterance, and therefore rendered me dumb; till he cried, "speak to me, my charmer, my angel; speak; no words can be so cruel as this silence. Your voice must delight whatever subject you chuse, but let it not be a harsh one; pity and forgive a man whose whole bliss is centered in you. Will you, can you pardon me?"

"Can my forgiveness be of any worth," I replied, "to one who could long harbour a wish to make me so criminal that I could not have pardoned myself? If it was of value, why would you desire to rob me of it, to whom it must be of most consequence."

"Upbraid me not," answered he, "with errors that make me wretched. If you knew how much I deserve your pity, forgiveness must succeed your compassion."

“ compassion. All my life shall be de-
“ voted to extenuate my offence. Ac-
“ tions proceeding from the truest, the
“ purest love, shall plead the excuse of
“ my injurious designs. Believe my
“ word; I have never broken it; I will
“ not rise from your feet till you assure
“ me of my pardon.” “ Rise then,
“ now, my Lord,” said I; “ anger
“ maintains much shorter possession of
“ my mind than grief: I can suffer, but
“ not resent. From my heart I forgive
“ all the misery you have inflicted, and
“ the greater still which you intended
“ me. I forgive you your constant
“ endeavours to create a love in me,
“ which could only tend to my unhap-
“ piness. I will not exclude even this
“ last pain, this interview, which tears
“ my heart: it is your inflicting, and
“ therefore I will receive it with pa-
“ tience; but I had hoped to be settled
“ in peace without undergoing any new
“ conflicts; I would not have troubled
“ you in the search of tranquillity; a
“ blessing hard to find, for a heart so
“ fond, so tender as mine; one that is
“ by you taught all the anguish that the
“ highest

“ highest degree of sensibility can give.
“ It was, before I knew you, in the en-
“ tire possession of rest and peace; had
“ no wish ungratified, no fear, no jarr-
“ ing passions to torment it. This
“ dreadful change I pardon you; and
“ while I am seeking in my solitude for
“ my former ease, I will pray for your
“ felicity, and tears shall wash away all
“ resentment; I might be happy, if
“ they could drown remembrance too.”

Tears eased the rack I was upon, and
gave my Lord time to desire me not to
talk of returning to my cottage, for it
was uniting death with the healing
sound of pardon. “ If you love me,”
continued he, “ can you wish for such
“ a separation? You have now no rea-
“ son to fly me. I have no concealed
“ design. I was, indeed, greatly pre-
“ judiced against marriage, but you
“ have removed it all; I now look on
“ it as a state of bliss, if you are my
“ companion in it; and pray for it
“ more devoutly than ever martyr did
“ for Heaven. Indeed, I have had my
“ martyrdom; no tyrant could inflict
“ a torment beyond what your ab-
“ sence

“ sence has made me suffer. What bitter accusations have I not made against myself, for permitting prejudice to get the better of the truest love that ever possessed the heart of man. If you are only indifferent, mere pity will move you to comply. If you do not hate me, you will consent to become my dear, my wedded wife directly; you will relieve my mind from its present sufferings; and put it in my power to make what recompence I can for the trouble I have caused you.”

“ That I love you,” I replied, “ I am much too well convinced by painful experience; but you have so forfeited my esteem, that I cannot comply with your proposal. I could not be happy if I was married to you, consequently should not make you so. Your passion for me is the same it was, all the difference is in the companions of it. While accompanied by hope, you know how little I was obliged to you for it; now despair has taken its place, it has blinded you, and I will believe you think your affection
“ all

“ all you say it is ; but was your despair
“ to cease, you would find your mistake
“ too late, after we were both made sa-
“ crifices to the deception. I have lost
“ all my confidence in you, and detest
“ the rest of your nation. I will go
“ where I shall be secluded from man-
“ kind, where virtue makes every ac-
“ tion open and intelligible; there I
“ am capable of living happily, without
“ learning the arts that here hide every
“ real thought. If this resolution is
“ painful to you, make it likewise be-
“ neficial ; trust me, so corrupt a peo-
“ ple cannot be taught virtue, but by
“ suffering. Affliction will purify a
“ heart perverted by education and
“ custom ; it takes off the varnish from
“ glaring vices, and shews them in their
“ own dark colours. . If you really suf-
“ fer, consider to what it is owing, learn
“ to hate vice, which as certainly carries
“ its punishment as virtue does its re-
“ ward along with it. But why should
“ I think you can suffer long enough to
“ do you any good ! Your heart is not
“ made like mine, therefore I cannot
“ judge of it.” “ Can you,” cried my
Lord,

Lord, “ kindly shed these tears to part
“ with me, and yet accompany them
“ with so cruel a declaration of your intention?” He omitted nothing that he thought could prevail with me, and so far did he succeed, that had I known how much I should have been affected I would not have staid to hear him, for I could not have believed my reason strong enough to resist my own agitation of mind, and the distraction he appeared in. He saw my distress, but receiving hope from it, cruelly continued his persuasions, I would have left him, but he held me fast, protesting he would never let me go till I promised to be his wife. He offered me the disposal of half his fortune to make me less dependent; but when our ease of heart depends so entirely on another’s love, what freedom can money give us?

I know not whether I could for ever have refused to comply; but happily for me, his reason failed him before he had sufficiently conquered mine to get my consent; his spirits were so oppressed, he became quite speechless, and almost senseless. I was half-distracted; but as soon
as

as he began to come out of this fit, to avoid prolonging a scene so difficult for me to support, I left the room, though not without taking a kinder farewell than seemed consistent with a desire never to see him again, which I begged, while, with tears, I kissed his hand. He had only power to look up at me, with dying eyes, swimming in tears. Thus I left him: but how hard it was to do so, none can know but those who have loved as well and gone through as severe a trial.

I shut myself into another room, there to give way to the distraction of my mind, which was so excessive, that when Mr. South came I was not capable of attending or speaking to him. He was greatly touched, and endeavoured to soothe and compose me; but finding it impossible, he went away, unable to support the sight of me in that distress. The next time Mr. South came, he found me more capable of hearing what had passed after Lord Dorchester sent for him.

He told me, that my Lord was waiting for him, and as soon as the servant introduced him, asked, with the utmost impatience,

impatience, if he could impart any news of Miss Lenox? Mr. South expressed some surprize at his Lordship's applying to him, who alledged for the reason of it, "the knowledge of the regard he
" had for me, and the reason I had to
" place a confidence in him, which
" made him appear the properest per-
" son to whom I could have recourse,
" in a situation where, without the as-
" sistance of one more accustomed to
" the world, it must be very difficult
" to conduct myself. That this proba-
" bility was turned into almost a cer-
" tainty, by the account of one of the
" people whom he had in pay at every
" place in town where equipages were
" to be hired, to prevent my getting
" away from it without his knowledge.
This man told him " he had seen a
" clergyman hire a chariot which he
" had looked at, and seemed to prefer
" to the rest for having canvasses to
" let down before the glasses; at least
" he could guess no other reason for the
" preference he gave it, as it was ra-
" ther the worst vehicle there. That
" upon this, his spy followed him to his
" lodgings,

“ lodgings, and learnt his name. My
“ Lord then, in the most affecting
“ terms, conjured Mr. South to tell
“ him where I was.

He answered, that “ he did not know,
“ though he was obliged to chance for
“ finding me out, but that he must beg
“ to be excused giving an information
“ that might make a resolution more
“ difficult to execute, which was already
“ almost too hard for a woman who,
“ except virtue, loved nothing so well
“ as his Lordship.

My Lord said, “ he hoped they were
“ not inconsistent: he would not have
“ asked him for any information of
“ which he designed to make a bad use.
“ He had no other wish but to marry
“ me, and wanted to see me, to obtain
“ my consent, together with my for-
“ giveness for what was past, and hoped
“ it might be gained, as he had only
“ mentally offended, and would devote
“ his life to make me reparation.” He
added, “ that he could not live without
“ me, and should gratefully receive me
“ on my own terms, if I pleased, that
“ very day; for no time was early
“ enough for his impatience.”

VOL. II.

M

Mr.

Mr. South offered to come and tell me his present sentiments; but my Lord begged he might not defer seeing me, and prevailed on him to direct him where to find me.

After Lord Dorchester left me, he sent again for Mr. South, who found him in a way that the description alone moved my heart too much at. He begged Mr. South's assistance in his endeavours to prevail on me to desist from my purpose of never seeing him again.

Mr. South promised he would give it him; but added, that "if my love for his Lordship could not prevail, he feared all other advocates would prove very weak. That if I was able to persist in my resolution, notwithstanding the distress I saw him in, in the interview, which, he imagined, would have ended in our union, he did not flatter himself he could make me change it."

I told him "he had undertaken an unsuccessful cause: that his expectations of the little he should be able to effect were so well founded, I need give no other reasons to persuade him to desist from a persecution, with which,

“ which, however obstinately, I had
“ determined not to comply; yet to
“ resist was very painful to me. . . .

That I might be removed from these obstructions to my intended departure, which I feared would grow too strong for my resolution, I desired Mr. South would procure me an equipage for the next day, without imparting to my Lord the suddenness of my determination. He promised to fulfil my request. I wished myself in some place where my Lord could not find me, for I feared I should not be proof against another interview, though I was fortified by the full belief that I could not be happy with one so defective in his principles, on the goodness of which must depend the felicity of all those small societies. As esteem is a necessary foundation for a lasting love, I could not believe this change in him arose from an amendment of heart, but from despair of success in his former schemes, and was convinced it would therefore be madness to unite myself for life with one who had no better motive; for no suffering can equal that of being married to a man of whom one has a bad opinion.

M 2

As

As soon as Mr. South had reported his small success, Lady Palestine was sent by my Lord to try whether she could prevail. Your Ladyship may imagine I did not give her a very cordial reception. She took no notice of it, but addressed me with fondness, and began to combat my intention by setting before me all the happiness that attended my consent to marry my Lord. Instead of endeavouring to excuse his faults, she only said lightly, that no other man would have preserved so blameless a behaviour, and proceeded to shew an union with him in the most pleasing light. Her aim was to bring my affections to her side of the argument.

I did not let her go on long; but told her, “ it well became one who could con-
 “ descend to connive at, and assist such
 “ villainous designs as had been har-
 “ boured against me, to endeavour to
 “ prevail by the force of passion, against
 “ the reason which ought to subdue it;
 “ but that I was not to be moved by ar-
 “ guments so wrongly applied, and ut-
 “ tered by one from whom every thing
 “ must appear in a suspicious light, and
 “ who would disgrace even the cause of
 “ virtue by defending it. Without say-
 “ ing

“ing much more, I affronted her, and
“freed myself from her importunities.”

1. Lord Dorchester came soon after; but
I heard a coach stop, and fearing it was
him, hid myself so well, that tho’ the
house was diligently searched, they could
not find me. After that he sent me a
letter; but I did not chuse to give him
more arms against myself, so sent it back
with a desire he would leave me in peace.

Before I had time to compose my spi-
rits, Miss Baden was brought up stairs.
I was greatly surprized to see her; but my
heart was so great a stranger to pleasure,
that I could not find words to express
what I felt at her visit, so soon as she did
the occasion of it. “I am come,” said
she, “to plead a cause, in which I find
“so many others have been unsuccessful,
“that although to be employed might
“raise my vanity, it ought to create
“fears in me that all my endeavours
“will prove fruitless. My regard for
“you, the pleasure I have always ima-
“gined I must find in your friendship,
“and pity for one whose distress would
“move a harder heart than mine, makes
“me wish for eloquence enough to pre-
“vail in my suit.” She proceeded to

M 3

tell

tell me that she had had a visit from Lord Dorchester. As soon as he came in he told her, that “tho’ he had never
 “ before had the honour of waiting on
 “ her, yet he trusted in her good nature
 “ for his pardon, when she knew that he
 “ had placed all hopes of the happiness
 “ of his life in her.”

He related to her every thing that had passed between him and me, from the time of his first seeing me till his last trial, by Lady Palestine, of prevailing on me to lay aside my intention of returning to my aunt. He added, that “he knew I had
 “ a good opinion of her, and he had never
 “ seen so strong an inclination in me to
 “ any other person; he therefore hoped
 “ she might be more successful, if she
 “ would kindly undertake his cause.”

I told her “it was a bad one, and I wondered she would engage in it.” She replied, “that I ought not to expect consummate virtue among a degenerate
 “ people; that it was scarcely possible to
 “ find a man who had any scruples in
 “ regard to his behaviour to women.
 “ She gave me a thousand instances
 “ wherein the men of the best characters
 “ had failed; telling me they esteemed
 “ matrimony

“ matrimony as so entirely a political in-
“ stitution, that though each might ap-
“ prove of it in society, many did not
“ like it for themselves. . . That they
“ looked on the life of a woman who
“ lived with them without being mar-
“ ried, as generally most happy. . . That
“ my Lord, in the care he had taken of
“ my reputation, had shewn a delicacy
“ and an affection for me of which few
“ men were capable; that in every other
“ virtue he was as nearly perfect as a hu-
“ man creature could be. . . She told me
“ how much I ought to allow for the
“ force of custom and education; these
“ had both tended to make him look on
“ chastity as a very small virtue, for that
“ it was even made the subject of ridi-
“ cule in such men as were possessed of it.”

In short, she said so much in his ex-
cuse, that although I could not allow
that custom should so far overcome truth,
I found some satisfaction in thinking him
less criminal, but still saw him too much
so not to resist all her importunities, and
she was obliged to submit to my obsti-
nacy.

I should be deficient in sincerity, were
I not to confess that Miss Baden's per-

M 4

suaſions

suaſions a little ſtaggered my reſolution. I ſometimes was inclined to doubt whether Lord Dorcheſter could be ſo much to blame, ſince ſhe undertook to excuſe him, and whether I might not be allowed to forgive one I loved ſo tenderly, ſince a woman who had no ſuch motive could ſo eaſily acquit him. But I ſoon became ſenſible this was the dictate of my paſſion. Bad examples and pernicious habits, had, in a degree, perverted Miſs Baden; the frequency of vice had deadened her ſenſe of it; but I had no ſuch excuſe; cuſtom had not confounded my ideas of right and wrong, and therefore to have united myſelf with a perſon whom I knew guilty of vice, was, in a degree, to become vicious; and I could not have a ſtronger reaſon to avoid it than Miſs Baden herſelf furniſhed me with, for ſince a woman of virtue could, by example, have her principles ſo much perverted, the danger I ſhould run by marrying Lord Dorcheſter was obvious; and to put ourſelves in a ſituation that muſt hazard our integrity, is a great proof that it is not at that time ſufficiently ſtrong. I very frankly told Miſs Baden how
much

much more prevalent I found her example than her arguments, for that “ she
“ could urge no reasons which would
“ so strongly induce me to live with
“ Lord Dorchester, as her being capable
“ of urging them would deter me from
“ it, since she thereby shewed me the
“ danger that arose from a communication with mankind ; for I should
“ fear that my principles might be corrupted by the same means that had
“ perverted her’s. Therefore all she
“ could say only proved to me the necessity of flying mankind, if I designed to
“ hold fast my integrity as long as I
“ lived.”

Miss Baden smiled, without any appearance of resentment at what I had said, and only answered, that “ she saw I
“ was determined to make no difference
“ between excusing the guilt of others,
“ and accompanying them in the crime ;
“ and since I was resolved to retire from
“ the world, in order to avoid becoming
“ as bad as she was, she found she had
“ little chance of carrying back any consolation to Lord Dorchester ;” and the night being far spent, she took leave of me.

C H A P. XLIX.

MY mind had been too much agitated in the day, to allow me any rest at night. The various attacks that had been made on my passions, had cost my reason so much labour to resist, that I had not strength enough to compose my spirits, which, when Mr. South attended me the next morning, were in a state little different from what they were when he left me the day before. He imagined night would afford me but little relief, and therefore came the earlier, out of a kind desire to divert my thoughts, if he could not alleviate my uneasiness.

Before the hour the chariot was ordered, a letter was brought, which I perceived, by the superscription, was from Lord Dorchester. The first impulse was to return it unopened, to avoid giving fresh pain to my heart; but before I could put the thought in execution, it gave place to a tenderer consideration; I feared by such a proceeding I might add to his uneasiness; and this, in a point that could do me no essential harm, was
ungenerously

ungenerously preferring my own ease to his, and since I was just going to execute a resolution which affected him so much, it would be cruel to encrease it unnecessarily. I therefore opened the letter, and, to my great surprize, learnt from it, that “ he left London before break of day, in order to proceed directly to my aunt’s, having hopes of obtaining her mediation in his favour, which he flattered himself might have more weight than any other person’s had yet had.”

Nothing could have filled me with greater astonishment. To expect so good a woman should plead in the excuse of vice, appeared to me extremely absurd; but the consequence of this step was the preventing my journey; since had I prosecuted it, I must have met him on the road, or found him there; neither of which would have been at all agreeable to my purpose. The best scheme I could now form, was to leave my lodging before he could return to town, and remove into some obscure house in the suburbs; and that as soon as Mr. South, who kindly undertook this additional trouble, could learn that he was come back,

back, I should set out directly on my journey. We were not without hopes, that as my Lord had taken his usual retinue with him, the person employed to watch his arrival in London, might learn some particulars of the situation of my aunt's house, that would serve to direct us, and save a very difficult, and, perhaps, a very tedious search after it.

My travelling equipage was sent away, and every thing settled for my continuance at my lodging, till I imagined Lord Dorchester might be coming back; for I liked the people of the house too well to leave them while I could avoid it. Their humanity endeared them to me; they had gathered so much light into my situation, by circumstances that had fallen within their observation, that I thought myself obliged to acquaint them with a little more, lest they should have received impressions that might make them discontented with my continuing in their house. This Mr. South performed; and though he told them very few particulars, yet their good nature appeared very conspicuously on the occasion, and their greatest wish was to amuse me. But in this they could not
succeed

succed so easily, as in making their house perfectly convenient. To relieve the anxiety of my mind, was reserved for others, who, for the time they were with me, did it effectually, and inspired me with a joy which on my own account I could not have felt.

Sir Charles Lisdale came to town two days after Lord Dorchester left it, and not finding his Lordship, went to Lady Palestine's, where he heard my whole history, and, desirous of seeing me, was directed by her to my lodgings.

Sir Charles directly came to my lodgings, and sending up his name, asked leave to wait on me; a permission I readily granted; and he was brought up stairs with a young lady who I perceived to be a daughter of Captain Traverse, and consequently received her with pleasure. I was glad to observe more chearfulness in Sir Charles's countenance than when we last met. He accosted me with saying, " he was come to claim the friendship " I had once offered him. That time, " absence, and despair, had made him " more reasonable, and brought him to " see that he was presumptuous in aim- " ing to possess me, and not thinking " that

“ that ‘my acquaintance and conversation was more happiness than he merited.’ I told him, “ mine would be “ greater if he would cease to flatter, “ an effect which I might hope from “ the improvement of his reason, of “ which he boasted, since it must make “ him know, that in what he said he “ far exceeded the truth, and might “ incline him to believe that he likewise exceeded my credulity.”

He answered, that “ I had much mistaken the office of reason, if I imagined it had altered his opinion of me, it “ had only made him more sensible of “ his demerits, which shewed too much “ inequality between us to give him the “ least room for hope. But,” continued he, taking the young lady who accompanied him by the hand; “ let me “ beg your friendship for one who has “ kindly soothed my griefs, and turned “ my disappointment into happiness.”

I was overjoyed at these words; I gathered from them that they either were already, or were to be united. I embraced and congratulated her with transport. She had so favourable a prospect of happiness, both from Sir Charles’s good qualities,

lities, and the affluence of his fortune, that nothing could give me more pleasure; she blushed, in appearance, from excess of satisfaction, and looked up at him with so much love and gratitude as charmed me. I could not remain long without expressing a desire to know how this union was brought about, which seemed to me as impossible as any thing could be. Sir Charles assured me he would gratify my curiosity, which he did in the following words.

“ When you deprived me of all hopes
“ of obtaining your affection, having no
“ longer any pleasure or interest in soci-
“ ety, my only aim was an absolute re-
“ tirement, till my passion should be so
“ much moderated as to allow me to
“ endure company, and to enable me to
“ be fit for it. To secure such a retreat
“ it was necessary to chuse some place
“ where I was not known. This led
“ me to the borders of Wales, as the
“ most promising for the solitude I
“ sought. It answered my hopes. I
“ found a little cottage situated to my
“ wish, for every thing around it ap-
“ peared as desolate as my mind. Left
“ I should be troubled with visits from
“ any

“ any gentleman in the neighbourhood,
“ I concealed my name, and passed for
“ a man driven thither by poverty and
“ distress ; a certain melancholy in my
“ air created this report, and I would
“ not contradict it, for nothing could
“ better favour my temper. None are
“ so sure of neglect as the poor ; they
“ may enjoy an absolute solitude in the
“ most populous city ; therefore it is not
“ wonderful, if no one broke in upon
“ my time and reflections. However, I
“ had not been there long before I be-
“ came acquainted with Captain Tra-
“ verse’s family, whose circumstances ap-
“ peared to correspond with mine. Lit-
“ tle inclined to extend our thoughts be-
“ yond ourselves, we were made known
“ to each other, only by sitting in the
“ same pew at church, without which
“ circumstance, perhaps, we should have
“ remained ignorant that there was any
“ unhappy persons in the neighbour-
“ hood, besides ourselves. After we had
“ been obliged to speak civilly to each
“ other, by these means, he one day in-
“ vited me to go home with him, after
“ church. I liked the manner of his be-
“ haviour, and was well disposed to ac-
“ cept

“ cept his invitation. Towards evening,
“ he asked me if I would drink a little
“ milk,” adding, “ it might seem an
“ odd question, but it was the only of-
“ fer he could make me, having neither
“ tea nor wine, for they were too expen-
“ sive for persons in his circumstances;
“ who wanted all the little money they
“ had to furnish them with more necessa-
“ ry things. I was greatly pleased to see
“ with what ease they denied themselves
“ the small indulgence which the lowest
“ people enjoy. I would gladly have in-
“ creased their income, but I feared to
“ make myself suspected of being less
“ poor than I was thought, which I wish-
“ ed to avoid till I knew whether they
“ were to be trusted. Finding them very
“ agreeable, I used frequently to visit
“ them, and they often returned it. I
“ received great pleasure from their soci-
“ ety, and was more charmed with them
“ as my acquaintance with their tempers
“ and conduct increased. This young
“ lady particularly, I found so amiable
“ in her disposition, as, joined with her
“ beauty, to make me feel all the regard
“ of a friend towards her. She shewed
“ the same attentions to me; nor were her
“ parents

“ parents offended with our innocent af-
“ fection. She was always employed ei-
“ ther in attending her mother, taking
“ care of the family or working for them.
“ I admired the alacrity and good sense
“ with which she performed her different
“ duties, and became her companion in
“ many of them. With very great diffi-
“ culty I prevailed on the captain to suf-
“ fer me to join my little family with
“ theirs, on condition I should pay half
“ the expences of the whole. He ob-
“ jected that this was more than my share,
“ and that he feared there was great si-
“ militude in our circumstances. How-
“ ever, at last I succeeded, and we be-
“ came one family. They let me bring
“ books there, and those that were at
“ work would often listen to me while
“ I read aloud; my lovely *Fanny* most
“ of all; tho’ when we were alone the
“ time was seldom given to books. I
“ used to lament at my misfortunes,
“ communicated to her the passion with
“ which my heart was filled, concealing
“ none of the truth but my name and
“ fortune, leaving her to imagine that
“ my ill success proceeded from my po-
“ verty. With how much good sense
“ she

“ she would endeavour to shew me the
“ necessity of conquering my love!
“ With what gentle sweetness would
“ she try to comfort me! How tenderly
“ did she join with me in my com-
“ plaints, and endeavour to soothe
“ them! It is impossible I can ever re-
“ compence her for the excessive good-
“ ness she shewed me. I am afraid her
“ kind behaviour tempted me to teize
“ her the more with my uneasiness. I
“ felt so much pleasure in being com-
“ forted by her, as led me to encourage
“ my distress.

“ I had not long made part of this
“ amiable family, when Captain Tra-
“ verse went to London. You already
“ know what drew him thither, and the
“ ill success of his solicitations, as well
“ as the unexpected blessings which
“ Lord Dorchester’s generosity bestow-
“ ed upon him. I had undertaken to
“ supply his care over his children’s
“ studies during his absence, which
“ proved an agreeable amusement to
“ me, as I did not act the part of a
“ school-master long enough for it to
“ lose the pleasure of novelty. Any
“ thing new gave a turn to my thoughts,
“ and was, thereby, of service to me.

“ Lord

“ Lord Dorchester’s letter broke in
“ upon the peace I began to acquire,
“ by robbing me of all my companions:
“ His character sufficiently convinced
“ me that he had some generous design
“ in sending for them, tho’ he hinted
“ it but darkly in his letter. This could
“ not recompence me for their loss, as
“ I was myself able to relieve their dis-
“ tresses, and was determined, after be-
“ ing longer acquainted with their me-
“ rits, to have made them easy. My
“ Fanny promised not to let a post pass
“ without acquainting me with the
“ event of their journey, and was as
“ good as her word. The joy and gra-
“ titude expressed in her letter, made
“ me envy Lord Dorchester the plea-
“ sure of having conferred so noble an
“ obligation on people who had hearts
“ to feel it so sensibly and esteem it so
“ justly. The captain’s convenience
“ would no longer suffer them to live
“ at so great a distance from London,
“ they therefore hired a house about
“ twenty miles from it, which his Lord-
“ ship furnished very genteely for them.
“ As my Fanny and I kept up a very
“ constant correspondence, I was fre-
“ quently solicited to forsake my de-
“ solate

“solate solitude, and once more make
“part of their family? At first, melan-
“choly was more powerful than their
“persuasions, and I resisted them; but I
“soon began to accuse myself of obstina-
“cy, and, on their assuring me that they
“lived extremely retired, I consented,
“and went to be a witness of, and con-
“sequently a sharer in the happiness, at
“which none can arrive who have not be-
“fore felt the cruel distresses they had en-
“dured.

“But I had not enjoyed this satisfac-
“tion many days, before I was taken ill
“of a fever. My Fanny was now my
“constant friend and tender nurse, and
“seemed to forget the general happiness
“in a humane concern for what I suf-
“fered. My fever increased, till I grew
“so very ill that it appeared proper to
“send for a physician. He thought
“my life in great danger, which decla-
“ration made my fair nurse inconsolable.
“The affliction in which she appeared,
“touched me excessively. I fancied I
“saw in it a softer passion than friendship.
“No one can be truly sensible of the
“pleasure of being beloved, but he who
“has felt all the pangs of an unsuccess-
“ful

ful passion. The hopes I had formed,
increased my regard and esteem for
her; and one day, as she was sitting
by my bed-side, I told her, that her
incomparable goodness had conquered
the grief with which my heart was
filled, when I first knew her, and had
taken the place of a love I thought
eternal; therefore she must not wonder
if, henceforward I complained of no
passion but one for her, and I should
esteem myself very happy if she would
take her usual pains to comfort me.
She looked stedfastly on me, and then
calling to my servant, who was at the
other end of the room, she told him
my senses wandered, and desired him
to repeat the last medicine. I assured
her that they were never more per-
fect; and, after some time, convinced
her that I spoke my real and sober sen-
timents. She then burst into tears,
and begged I would not say any thing
that might increase her affection, or
make my company give her more plea-
sure, at a juncture when it was very un-
certain how long she should enjoy it.
This kind reception of my declaration
rendered me incapable of obeying her;
and

“ and my melancholy situation so softened her mind, that she returned it in the most endearing manner. I would not discover my real circumstances, desirous to try her affection to the utmost; Her joy appeared very sincere indeed; on being assured I was out of danger. The progress of my recovery gave her as much satisfaction as her satisfaction did me. I continued my addresses to her; but I found her return less tender as I grew better in health, which made me tell her that I wished myself sick again. However, I had no real cause for complaint. I perceived she put some constraint on herself, to alter a behaviour which she thought justifiable only during my illness, when mere compassion required a shew of tenderness.

“ As soon as I got well, I proposed to marry her. She begged me not to think of it, for she could not possibly agree to add to my distresses by making me poorer; and thought we then lived happily in the innocent assurance of each other's affection. As this was an objection I could easily remove, it did not make me alter my design; but
“ before

“ before I confessed my real name, I
“ was desirous of trying the degree of
“ estimation in which I was held by
“ Captain Traverse, by making my pro-
“ posal of becoming his son-in-law, be-
“ fore he was acquainted with my for-
“ tune. But while I was preparing to
“ put this scheme in execution, my
“ thoughts received a new turn. My
“ sickness had prevented me from hav-
“ ing much conversation in the family ;
“ but now, being well enough to affoci-
“ ate with them, I was talking with the
“ Captain on the change in his affairs,
“ when he mentioned Lord Dorchester’s
“ Lady. Having left him a batchelor,
“ I was curious to know who she was,
“ perhaps the more so for the jealousy I
“ had always entertained of him, think-
“ ing that I perceived he was favoured
“ by you. The description they gave
“ me, and the raptures they were all
“ in when they mentioned your beauty
“ and every circumstance of your be-
“ haviour, convinced me my happy ri-
“ val had triumphed. Tho’ I thought
“ my passion over, yet I own I was so
“ much affected with this news, that I
“ could not contain myself. I had grown
“ easy

“ easy by looking on you as a being far
 “ above us, one designed to be adored,
 “ but not possessed; one to whom all
 “ mankind, as well as myself, must pay
 “ an unavailing worship, and submitted
 “ patiently to the general fate; but I
 “ found I could not bear to think ano-
 “ ther enjoyed a happiness I believed
 “ above a mortal.

“ My dearest Fanny will suffer me to
 “ repeat this, as my emotions were too
 “ visible not to be perceived by her, who
 “ cruelly made me ashamed of my be-
 “ haviour by the most generous tender-
 “ ness. She guessed you were the wo-
 “ man whom I had often described, while
 “ she was the confidante of my passion.
 “ Instead of reproaching me for harbour-
 “ ing in my breast the sparks of any
 “ other love than her’s, she used all her
 “ softness to comfort me, while she ten-
 “ derly grieved for my misfortune and
 “ her own. Thus was I cured of my
 “ relapse, and in a few days restored to
 “ my peace of mind, ceasing to envy
 “ Lord Dorchester his divine Sacharissa,
 “ and happy in my lovely and tender
 “ Amoret. Her father declared he could
 VOL. II. N “ refuse

“ refuse me nothing, but advised us not
“ to marry; however, finding us re-
“ solved, he consented. I then gave
“ them all an exact account of my cir-
“ cumstances, which you may imagine
“ did not abate the satisfaction then
“ reigning in the family. I remained
“ with them at their country house till
“ two days ago, that I ventured to come
“ and congratulate you and Lord Dor-
“ chester on your union. You may ima-
“ gine how much I was surprized to
“ find it was not compleated; but could
“ not forbear coming hither to introduce
“ to you my Fanny, who made me the
“ happiest of men about a week ago, by
“ becoming my wife. And now, Ma-
“ dam, like all other romances, mine
“ must end with wedlock; but permit
“ me to hope we shall never be so much
“ tired of each other as you must be of
“ us both in this long story.”

Sir Charles was much mistaken, for I
was never less so. I was overjoyed at
acquiring two amiable friends, and at
seeing him so happy. For once I re-
flected with pleasure on the inconstancy
of mankind, since it had been so fortu-
nate to him. I ought not to confine the
happiness

happinefs of it entirely to Sir Charles, as I have received fo much from it myfelf; for the friendship which has ever fince fubfifted between me, Sir Charles, his lady, and her amiable family, I have always efteemed one of the moft pleafing circumftances of my life.

C H A P. L.

I HOPE your Ladyfhip now thinks it time, after fo long a digreffion, to return to Lord Dorchefter; for I fhould be forry to carry you fo tedious a journey, without you undertook it willingly; and yet, having little to fay of myfelf during that interval, I am under a neceffity of doing it, left I fhould feem to have put in execution the lover's wifh, and appear to have "annihilated both " fpace and time to make two lovers " happy." Lord Dorchefter travelled moft expeditioufly to my aunt's cottage. He found her reclined on a couch, the ferenity of her countenance changed into the moft dejected air, and her frefh complexion

plexion into a sickly pale. He came so gently to the door, that she did not hear him till he was entering the threshold. As soon as she saw him, she started up, and, with eyes that shot forth impatience and anger, but not without a mixture of joy, cried out, "where is my child?" "where is my Ophelia?"

The alteration Lord Dorchester perceived in her, awakened so severe a sense of the injury he had done her, that he was distressed and confounded, and could utter no more than "she is well; forgive me, Madam, forgive me!"

"Thank heaven!" cried my aunt, with hands and eyes lifted towards the heaven she thanked, "my child is well!" and then bursting into a flood of tears, sunk down on the couch, where she remained some time, not too much affected to utter now and then a grateful ejaculation, which would force its way in spite of the tears that almost suffocated her.

My Lord was too much moved to interrupt her till this painful excess of joy was abated; and then could do nothing but ask her forgiveness for all the uneasiness

easiness he must have given her; protesting his desire of making her all possible reparation. “As the first proof of it,” said she, “let me know whether you give me a possibility of pardoning you, by having the least title to it. Inform me of every particular since you robbed me of my dear child, the delight and only support of my life. But before you enter into a detail which may take up time, first tell me where she is? what is her situation? and whether she still does honour to the care I took to instruct her in the precepts of Religion and Virtue, that I may be better able to listen to the rest?”

In these points Lord Dorchester gave her full satisfaction; and then proceeded to relate the whole in order, only was at a loss to know how I became acquainted with his design. He endeavoured to excuse himself on account of his prejudices against matrimony, and expatiated on his objections to it, concluding, by telling her, that “his love had conquered them all, and to be united to me was the wish nearest

“ his heart ; and that I had hitherto
“ been inflexible, and, more mercilefs
“ than Heaven, would not pardon the
“ sincere penitent.” “ You could not
“ have faid any thing which could have
“ have given me fo sincere a pleasure,”
replied my aunt, “ fince this proves my
“ niece’s principles to be fuch as I wifh
“ them. Heaven, indeed, forgives the
“ sincere penitent ; but then the heart
“ is there laid open, and the fincerity
“ of it is well known. Ophelia cannot
“ have the fame affurance of your’s ;
“ even yourfelf cannot ; we often mif-
“ take the effects of difappointed paf-
“ fion for real virtue. If the innocence
“ and unfeigned piety of fo fine a young
“ creature could not change your heart,
“ how can one fuppose any thing elfe
“ will have that power. You tell me
“ ſhe loves you ; therefore may be fure
“ her paffions plead in your favour, and
“ could her reason give a fanction to
“ them, ſhe would concur with your
“ wifhes. That it has ſtrength fuffi-
“ cient to conquer the inſtigations of
“ her love, and the perfuaſions of her
“ lover, raifes her in my eſteem, and
“ gives

“ gives me a pleasure that almost repays
“ me for what I have suffered on her
“ account. Does not this noble com-
“ mand over herself, this steady adher-
“ ence to every virtuous principle,”
continued she, “ make you blush at the
“ remembrance of your design to debase
“ so much excellence? A little reflec-
“ tion, my Lord, will shew you the
“ false principles on which you have
“ founded your objections to matrimony.
“ Are you of so perverse a nature, that
“ a conformity to the laws of God and
“ man must rob society of all it’s
“ charms? And must the conversation
“ of one who loves you, lose all it’s
“ merit, as soon as it can be enjoyed
“ without a crime? Surely no man can
“ be so abandoned as to own such de-
“ praved sentiments! You are, it seems,
“ disgusted with the behaviour of many
“ wives; would you therefore, to mend
“ a woman’s conduct, learn her to de-
“ spise all ties, human and divine; and
“ to render her an amiable and valua-
“ ble companion, instruct her in vice?
“ Is that a means of teaching her to ac-
“ quit herself of the duties of society,

N 4

“ and

“ and the tenderer obligations of more
“ intimate connexions. Another of
“ your arguments against marriage is
“ little better than a prose paraphrase
“ of

Love, light as air, at sight of human ties,
Spreads its light wings, and in a moment
flies.

“ With all the abandoned rhapsody of
“ voluptuous vice. You talk of free-
“ dom and equality in a situation which
“ entirely abolishes both. What can
“ render a woman so much your slave,
“ as having given up her fair fame,
“ and that sweet peace that goodness
“ bosoms ever, to gratify your mean
“ passions? Where then is the equality
“ between you? You have in your
“ power every pleasure but self-appro-
“ bation; and, perhaps, the hardened
“ do not want that, while the woman
“ has nothing left her but your love,
“ which it is more her interest to keep,
“ even by little despicable arts, than it
“ could be in any other situation. As
“ soon as reason begins to return, in
“ what light do you imagine she herself
“ must

“ must see the man who has robbed her
“ of every blessing in life? Must she
“ not grow uneasy under such circum-
“ stances, and detest the ungenerous
“ mind that could draw her into an ac-
“ tion whose consequences were to her
“ so grievous, and to him so trifling,
“ that unless honour makes him, rather
“ than desert the woman he has ruined,
“ endure the effects of her afflicted
“ heart, and the fretfulness which na-
“ turally arises from it, he is under no
“ worldly disadvantage.”

Lord Dorchester listened with all the humility of a school-boy to his monitor, and gave her no interruption, but, with a doleful face, and a simple sheepishness that he never felt before, cried, now and then, “ very true, Madam ; right, “ Madam ; to be sure, Madam ; ” and such like sentences of mild and bashful approbation ; till my aunt thought it cruel to humble him any longer, into such a sneaking repentant boy. When she ended her sermon, he assured her that he was perfectly convinced of the truth of all she had said, and protested, with an air of sincerity that almost con-

vinced her, that “ if he might have the
“ free choice, whether he should have
“ her niece for his wife or mistress, he
“ should not hesitate a moment, but
“ prefer that state which should secure
“ her from the censure of the world,
“ and the reproaches of her own con-
“ science.” He abjured his past errors,
shewed the fallacies which had given rise
to them, and confuted his own argu-
ments so much more forcibly than my
aunt could do, that she was touched
with his candour, and grieved for the
pernicious education and examples which
had created any blemishes in a mind
that seemed naturally virtuous and up-
right. When he had succeeded thus
far, it was not very difficult to move a
heart by nature tender, and softened by
affliction. The excess of his grief ex-
cited her compassion, and pity had
some share in making her promise to
accompany him, though when she did
it, she imagined her only motive was
the desire of seeing me. During their
journey, his distress prevailed on her
to undertake to obtain his forgiveness.
He did not doubt but my regard for
her,

her, and the high opinion I had both of her judgment and principles, would make me submit to her persuasions, especially as he was too sensible they corresponded with the secret, though suppressed wishes of my heart. When they arrived in London, I had, according to the plan I had formed, left my lodging, and to save my kind landlady the pain of telling a falsehood, did not acquaint her with the place which I intended for my asylum. Mr. South, to avoid being importuned to discover my abode, changed his habitation likewise, and chose one whom he could trust, to watch Lord Dorchester's coming to town. His spy performed his office so well, that he heard it the night of his arrival, and was told by him that he saw my Lord hand a lady out of his chariot.

Mr. South asked me "if I did not
" imagine from this, my Lord had
" succeeded, and, in reality, brought
" up my aunt?" I could not believe
there was a possibility of her giving such
a sanction to his past conduct; how-
ever,

ever, I wished to be entirely certain : I dared not, indeed, consent that Mr. South should venture to Lord Dorchester's, lest, by watching him, my retreat might be discovered, as it was before ; but told him, that as they would naturally go to my old lodgings, if my Lord had really prevailed on her to accompany him, we might gain some intelligence from thence. Mr. South went thither accordingly the next morning, and learnt that " Lord Dorchester, and a lady, " whom they found by their discourse " was my aunt, came there as soon as " they entered London, and asking for " me, were under the greatest consternation at hearing I was gone from " thence." The good woman told them my motive, but at the same time assured them she knew not to what place I was removed. Upon this information, they went away much disappointed, after having promised her any reward if she could contrive a means of finding me out. She told them " she wanted " no other inducement to do that, than " the pleasure I should receive from " seeing

“ seeing an aunt I seemed to love so tenderly.”

As I was at a very great distance from my old lodgings, Mr. South thought that to go back to me would be robbing me of some hours of joy, and therefore, instead of returning, went to Lord Dorchester, where he found his Lordship and my aunt, concerting measures for finding me. The sight of him was most welcome to the former; with delight he received him, and intreated him “ to inform an anxious parent, and the still tenderer anxiety of a lover, where I was?”

As this was the intent of Mr. South’s visit, he immediately complied, and offered to guide them to me. The equipage was sent for, and stopped at my door, sometime after my impatience for the account I expected Mr. South to bring had fixed me to the window in hopes of seeing him arrive.

At the sight of my aunt, I ran to meet her; and we received each other with an embrace from which the spectators thought we could never be disengaged. I had already felt how much
the

the imagination falls short of the reality in sorrow, I now found it as poor a mirror of our joy. The extacy I was in, at seeing one so inexpressibly dear to me, far exceed the force of fancy, and a long time passed in rejoicing at the felicity we felt, before I took notice of the person who accompanied my aunt.

My Lord looked on me with tenderness and grief, but with an anxious timorousness that rendered him silent. My aunt observing it, as soon as we could think of any thing but the joy of meeting, told me, " she had undertaken to plead, what I should think " a bad cause, unless I would allow " repentance washed away sin." She then proceeded to say, " she thought " Lord Dorchester had suffered so much " he deserved to be forgiven." I objected all I had before said to myself and others on the occasion. I arraigned his principles and conduct with more severity, I believe, for finding he had an advocate; for I felt a satisfaction in hearing him a little excused. My aunt's arguments were much the same with

with Miss Baden's, and would not have proved more efficacious, had it not been easier to influence my heart than to convince my reason. Her opinion gave a sanction for my yielding; I could call my weakness obedient; an opportunity of so agreeably deceiving myself, staggered my resolution, and I began to listen with pleasure to the apology my aunt made for him.

As soon as Lord Dorchester had perceived me wavering between reason and love, to strengthen the party of the latter, he attacked me with the most persuasive importunity. Though my heart felt every syllable he uttered, yet my mind was too much agitated to suffer my memory to retain what he said; all I know is, that every word, every look, every action of his, spoke too much to be expressed by any other. Such powerful eloquence was not to be for ever resisted; unable to bear a longer continuance of the scene, I cried out, "you have conquered all my resolutions; dispose of the remainder of my life as you please; my
" happiness

“ happiness is in your hands ; I may
“ repent, but I find I must comply !”

Lord Dorchester’s excessive joy made me feel that pleasure in my consent which reason had denied me. My felicity was perfect in seeing I had made him happy ; I was insensible to any dangers, with which my peace was threatened by his principles, while I had the infinite satisfaction of imparting happiness to one that was dearer to me than myself ; I felt I was unworthy of a thought, mine were all engrossed by him, every other object seemed beneath my care, and if he was happy I believed I must be blessed.

As soon as his Lordship’s extasies were a little over, my aunt turned toward him and said, “ my Lord, I have
“ done all you asked of me ; I have
“ suffered compassion, and that weak
“ sympathy, which I believe all feel
“ for the pains of lovers, who have
“ themselves known the pangs of love,
“ to conquer my opinion. I have per-
“ suaded the only joy of my heart,
“ and blessing of my age, to an uni-
“ on

“ on with a man whose principles I
“ always looked upon as an infallible
“ source of unhappiness to the wo-
“ man whose fate must depend upon
“ them. I never saw any thing but
“ repentance succeed a marriage with
“ a rake; and yet compassion for you,
“ and, indeed, for my niece, whose
“ fondness for you is but too visible,
“ through all the resolution she has
“ assumed, has made me plead your
“ cause, and prevail in it. I feared
“ for her, the grief which would have
“ succeeded the sharper pains of sepa-
“ ration. I, who have felt it, know
“ how hardly life is supported under
“ a load of sorrow. I pitied you for
“ having a worthy mind so corrupted.
“ Can you do less, my Lord, than
“ reward Ophelia's love and my com-
“ passion, by preserving the principles
“ you now profess, and by keeping the
“ strictest guard over yourself, lest you
“ should again deviate from the path of
“ virtue? I know you are not ab-
“ solutely a rake, and therein I place
“ my hopes.”

Your

Your Ladyship may imagine Lord Dorchester was not sparing of his promises. He defended himself from the imputation of a rake, though he confessed his principles had been very defective, and gave her every assurance that could make her easy; and what is more extraordinary, he fulfilled them all, and rendered the rest of our lives a scene of bliss; though I confess it was not immediately I could depend on my own happiness. I feared reverses, which would be more severely felt for the felicity I enjoyed. But time banished my apprehensions, and taught me that a mind naturally good may be clouded for a time, but will recover its original lustre, and shake off the bad influence of vicious examples, and the erroneous opinions of the fashionable world, if it has the good fortune to suffer sufficiently by them. But as that does not happen so often as one could wish, for the reformation of mankind, and it is difficult to know when a person has been sufficiently punished to effect their amendment, mine was a dangerous

dangerous trial, and, I think, my imprudence in making it, deserved a punishment rather than a reward ; which has increased my gratitude to Heaven for a state of happiness which I by no means merited.

Lord Dorchester, to gratify himself in his darling pleasure for doing good, procured a very considerable preferment for Mr. South, and behaved with the utmost generosity to my aunt ; he settled a very handsome income on her ; and to gratify both her and me, made such additions to her little cottage, as gave us the power of accompanying her thither, where we spent three months in every year, which, in the opinion of us all, was the time when we enjoyed the most perfect happiness, as we were there free from all interruptions.

Lord Dorchester was very desirous of knowing how I became acquainted with his designs on me ; but I made his giving a solemn promise never to ask any questions concerning it, one of the conditions of our marriage. I feared his resentment against Lord Larborough, had he been acquainted with the part
he

he acted, and should have been very sorry if Lord Larborough had suffered by making a discovery that was so fortunate for me ; besides that Lord Dorchester might have been exposed to his share of danger, had a quarrel ensued. Lord Larborough was, I believe, under no small apprehensions on finding what turn the affair had taken ; but I seized the first opportunity of making him easy, by giving my word that “ I would conceal every thing he had done, in consideration of the obligation he thereby conferred on me, and that he might rest in perfect security in that particular.”

† He returned me many thanks, assuring me that “ he would ever gratefully acknowledge it ; and, to prevent all possibility of giving me any future offence by a passion he was unable to stifle, he would by degrees, break off his intimacy with my Lord, and avoid me as much as he could.” This resolution he steadily executed ; and before he died, which was two years after my marriage, he had almost entirely dropped our acquaintance. After

ter his death, as no danger could arise from it, I acquainted my Lord with what he had too strict a regard to his promise to have asked of me, telling him all that passed between Lord Larborough and myself, which, he said, “ rendered “ his Lordship rather the object of his “ gratitude, than of his anger, since “ the happy effects of what he had “ done excused the intention.”

Having obeyed your Ladyship’s commands, I shall now lay aside my pen, without making any apology for being so circumstantial, since obedience to your orders made me so; but shall grieve in silence that it was not in my power to render this little work more worthy of her who is to honour it with a perusal. If I have in some places repeated compliments which lay me under an imputation of vanity, I hope you will consider it as the unavoidable consequence of telling one’s own story with the sincerity you required; and as a necessary thing, in order to keep up in my reader such an idea of my person, as may represent me

me more worthy of her attention, which
you might have thought thrown away
on a dowdy, and deprived me of the
honour of subscribing myself,

Your Ladyship's

most obedient,

humble servant,

OPHELIA DORCHESTER.

FINIS.

